

LEAN AND LANK

ZELMA H. TANKERSLEY



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Lean and Lank

BY

ZELMA H. TANKERSLEY

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to all Leans and Lanks the world over whom the author loves, admires and wishes the highest, fullest, richest life that this world can know. Such can be theirs for: "If any man lack wisdom let him ask God." "Before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear."

P R E F A C E

This book is written in the best and highest commendatory praise of the many *now* active Judge Farrises and Daniel Fosters. So; and in hopes of reaching the many more,—and the peace that passes all understanding, the peace that the world cannot know will be theirs.

Z. H. T.

Prattville, Alabama,
October, 1929.

Lean and Lank

I

"Shine your shoes, please, Mister? Good job,—quick work. Thank you, sir. Morning paper? You'll have time to read the big head lines while I make them look like new." And the pale, sweet face, pinched by poverty and hunger, looked so appealing, so demanding of sympathy, the man of affairs sat upon the shabby chair, placed his feet upon the crude rack and took the morning paper proffered by the boy.

"Thank you sonny," as he took the paper, "give me an extra good shine now and I will give you extra good pay."

"All right, sir," and an appreciative grin wreathed the face as he gave a side-ways glance at his customer from brown eyes made abnormally large by the pale, drawn, wax-like skin, then began his work with business-like energy.

There was an indescribable something; an attractively alluring, a pathetically fascinating look upon the little boot-black's face which caused passers-by to "take notice," if they did not actually stop, take the chair, put their feet upon the rack and take the paper as it was gently but securely placed within the hand.

As the gentleman of affairs left the chair, he carefully folded the paper while he was being dusted and brushed, then, thrusting his hand in his pocket, he brought out a bright new fifty cent piece, handed it to the boy saying: "This money is new and you've made my shoes 'look like new,' so we are even, aren't we?"

"But, sir, I haven't the change."

"There is no change. You gave the extra good job

and you get the extra good pay according to our contract."

As he handed the paper to the youngster, the man noted the shapely, but claw like hands as the little fellow took it, and passed his bony fingers heavily over it to emphasize the creases so it would "lay flat," then laid it upon the special place he had fixed for it (two pegs driven into the side of the chair seat) the paper to be used as many times that day as there were customers. The man also noted the grateful, appreciative curl of his mouth and side glance from the alluring eyes as the boy looked gratefully at him—then lovingly at the coin.

The man passed on. He had become interested.—"That little chap has something peculiarly attractive about him,—can't define it," he mused as he passed on. When he reached the corner he turned as if to go down the street, but instead he entered the haberdashery and walked to the side door where he could look out upon the boy.

He was just in time to see a tobacco sack taken from the pocket of the boy, the draw-string pulled to its full capacity; he heard the coin as it dropped in with a thud and joined the company of two nickels and a dime already earned that morning. After a peep into the sack the string was drawn tight, the sack given a shake or two up and down—close to the boy's ear—the jingle made such pleasant music! The eyes said so. The top of the sack was then twisted tightly to make the money more secure and giving the bag a toss up, it was caught, given a powerful squeeze, a delighted smile, then crammed into the lowest corner of his pocket. He gave the pocket an affectionate, satisfied pat when the hand was withdrawn.

A graceful swing of the body carried him to the chair where, with his bare legs crossed, he whistled to himself and waited patiently for another customer.

The man of affairs walked slowly away, thoughtful. His interest and sympathies were aroused by the earnest, business-like, polite demeanor of the boy and several times a week thereafter, he came, sat upon the chair and

had his shoes "made like new," solely to see, chat with and help the little fellow, who never slackened in his efforts to please—to do the best job possible—and was so wholesomely pleasant about it.

A fellow of like trade had installed his place of business on the next block down and frequently they would signal their business successes during the day by a private code known only to themselves. They would stand with legs at an angle almost forty-five degrees, arms raised and energetically waved in wind-mill fashion several revolutions—then they would hold up their arms alternately with fingers well apart so that each could know the dimes made within a given period of time. The one showing the fewest fingers, would double his energies so the profits would nearer tally the evening when upon reaching home their earnings for the day would be poured from the tobacco sacks upon either end of the pine table, carefully counted and deposited in savings banks—(baking-powder cans with a slit cut in the tops, a piece of paper having been pasted with flour around the edge of the lids so the temptation to use money from their savings account would be lessened). The "banks" were then placed in the wooden box which held their supply of wearing apparel and pushed under the head of their bed.

The companion of like trade was taller by a head, was angular both as to form and feature. The high cheek bones seemed to have a way of hiding the dark, greenish, grey eyes, already somewhat obscured by a tangled mass of hair—a tawny mane always awry by the constant passage of long, dirty fingers through it, as he restlessly paced up and down, round and round while he waited for customers.

The two were as unlike in disposition as they were in general appearance. They had only two characteristics alike,—honesty to all, loyalty to each other. Their first introduction was quite a thrilling affair, came near being serious.

“Lean,” (as the smaller, younger fellow was called), was being unmercifully and unjustly thrashed by a bully of the streets, when “Lank” happened along. After a hurried conversation with one of the on-lookers, “Lank” immediately put aside his cap and coat and proceeded to have the tide of battle changed in “Lean’s” favor. This intervention gave “Lean” undisputed victory. Picking up several marbles, a sling shot, two nails, a tap and several buttons and beads, he handed them to “Lean”; then turned and collected his own property from a boy here and there who had picked up the articles as they had fallen from time to time from the champion’s pockets as the battle raged. The affair was over in a few minutes—before a cop was made wise—and the two marched off together. The taller one walked wobbly as he leaned down—his swaying, swinging stride gave the appearance of wrapping his legs around the smaller boy’s (as it were). He put an arm across the small boy’s shoulder and began questioning him as to the extent of his injuries; asked him concerning his home, his social standing, church affiliations, etc.

As they thus walked away leaving the crowd gazing admiringly after them, the gang called out good naturedly: “Goodbye Lank; goodbye Lean.” Names promptly accepted by both boys, as well as the crowd, as being entirely appropriate and satisfactory.

This introduction, though all unexpected and violent, was lasting and exceedingly peaceful.

CHAPTER II

“Myer, what is the chap’s name who has that dilapidated ‘shoe shine’ just to the side of your place?”

“I do not know, Judge, everybody calls him ‘Lean.’ Quite an unusual, interesting looking little fellow, isn’t he?”

“Yes—. Unless his every shirt is exactly alike he

wears the same one all the time, for they are identical, patches and all. Yet they are always clean, white and, though unstarched, are nicely pressed. I do not understand it. The jean trousers, too. The whole outfit looks and fits pretty well, somewhat distinguished looking, I'd say—certainly distinguishes him from those of his kind. His flesh is exceptionally fresh and clean for one in his position. The hungry, starved look he almost always wears annoys me,—haunts me at times."

"He seems to be somewhat choice about his eating, he won't eat hot-dogs and trash like that, as most of that class and clan do; I learned this by some of his crowd ragging him about it. He seems very fond of all fruits, especially apples and often I have an extra one for him. I had lunch sent over from a stand one day last week just to try him. I asked him to share it with me, but with his pleasant grin (grin is not the right word, it is a peculiar curve or an expression about his eyes, or mouth or both which makes his face very appealing)—he declined, saying he had eaten an apple and couldn't enjoy anything else then; but he did drink a glass of the milk which he thought was in danger of being sent back,—and do you know he sipped that stuff as slowly and as mannerly as if he had been always used to drinking in one of the fourhundred's drawing rooms.

"But why the question, Judge, does he strike you too?"

"Yes, I have been patronizing him all summer or since he has had his chair by your place. The chair, though comfortable looks like a home-made affair. I find something quite unusual about him—about the whole ensemble—he doesn't seem to be of the class of ordinary street rats."

"No, he doesn't. The only connection between him and the others is: his constant association with an ungainly, almost wild looking chap he buddies with, whom he calls 'Lank.' They can't be related for there is so absolutely nothing in common between them, yet a deep abiding, understanding exists. They afford me quite a lot of amuse-

ment at odd times when I happen to see them exchanging motions and jestures of every conceivable kind—entirely out of my ken, but seemingly entirely understandable to them.”

“These gauntlets are all right, Meyer, now get me a dozen of those collars I like, those with the rounded corners, you know,—No. 15½.”

“Yes, yes,—here you are.”

“Thanks. Goodbye, Meyer.”

“Good day, Judge. Thanks to you. Call again.”

“Shoes shined, sir?”

“Yes, Lean. Instead of reading the paper, as I have already seen one, I am going to talk with you while you give me the shine. How about it?”

“All right, sir, go ahead,” agreed Lean well pleased.

“First, I want to know your name so I can feel close enough—intimate enough, you know, to ask some questions. I am Judge Alston Farris and live on Riverside Drive, about a mile out.”

“Yes, Judge, I know you, I know where you live. My name is Daniel Foster. I stay about a mile below you further out . . .”

“On Duncan Row?”

“Yes, sir.”

“How did you know my name and where I live, Daniel?”

“Lank, a friend of mine told me. He used to carry papers and knows that part of the town like a book. I didn’t forget your home, for I think it is the prettiest place in the city and you have the prettiest little girl and dog I ever saw.”

“I have no little girl, Daniel. I have only two children, two boys; they are grown; one is married, the other is way off somewhere prospecting. Both live away from here. The little girl you saw there is my neighbor’s. She *is* pretty—she is beautiful and just as sweet, cute and bright as she is beautiful. My wife and I are

very fond of her, and she of us. She used to have a pretty Shetland pony—she called him Peek-a-boo and would bring him over often to graze on our lawn.

“I’ve never seen the pony.”

“No, lightning struck and killed him during an electric storm one day; then I gave her the dog. He is a Great Dane, she calls him ‘Judge’ honoring me.” The pleasant curve of the boy’s mouth, matched the pleasant chuckle of the man.

“Her curls look like shavings I’ve seen from old furniture, only they are lighter and shinier. I have wondered why she wore curls when most all other little girls have short hair.”

A short silence followed during which the Judge was thinking, but not about the little girl’s curls.

“Daniel, do you live with your parents?”

“I have no parents, sir. No kin folk that I know of. I stay with Lank and Mrs. Bishop, his mother. She is a widow and Lank helps support her. I board with them.”

“How old are you, Daniel?”

“Nearly eleven.”

“Do you go to school?”

“Only at night. Lank and I go to the night school for boys out Riply way.”

“What grade are you in?”

“They don’t have grades there. We are taught to read, write and spell; then we take up grammar, history, geography and other things.”

“What are you studying now?”

“I am in the fifth reader, speller, grammar, history, geography and arithmetic.”

“How much board do you pay?”

“Two dollars a week.”

“Is Mrs. Bishop good to you and Lank?”

“O, yes, sir, as good as she can be—but . . . ”

“But what—Daniel? Don’t be afraid or ashamed to

tell me. I like you and I only wanted to know so that I could . . . ”

“Yes, sir, I know, but . . . ”

“Daniel, how would you like to be my little boy so you could go to school every day? You like school, don’t you?”

“O, yes, sir, I like school and I like you too, but I could not do that.”

“Why, Daniel? I would be good to you. I think I know how to treat little boys as I have reared two of my own; they are fine boys, men now. I have a good cook and you need some good food to make you a big, strong, fine man,—nourishing to help develop these muscles.

While he was playfully feeling Lean’s muscles he was eyeing him generally and thinking—Lean was eyeing him and thinking too.

“How about it, Daniel?”

Lean felt he was on the verge of breaking his record of,—never shedding a tear—but instead of crying he looked harder upon the ground and kept flipping his big toe up and down on the pavement and pushing his hands almost through his pockets.

“How about it, Daniel?” repeated the Judge.

“I thank you, sir, but . . . ”

“But what?”

“I am afraid you wouldn’t want me if you knew how I lived ’till I went to Lank’s—and—and besides I can’t leave Lank.”

“Have you saved up any money?”

“I have a little, most enough for a pair of pants and shoes. Lank has a coat that’s too little for him. I am going to take that and go 50-50 with him in buying him a new one.”

“I see,” said the Judge much pleased as well as amused. “Do you two smoke?”

“Lank used to, but he’s quit?”

“Why did he quit?”

"We decided that we'd take that money to buy our pencils, tablets, and a book to read occasionally."

"You use the money he saves that way—to buy your own books?"

"O, no sir, I match his—if he saves a dime, I match it with a dime."

"O, I see. And you won't leave Lank for me? You like him better than you do me?"

"O, no sir. Yes, sir—I—I, you see I knew him first and . . ."

"And what else?"

"He's helped me out lots."

"Could I come to see you sometimes; say next Friday night—or will you be in school?"

"We don't go to school until eight."

"Well, let's say six o'clock; will that suit?"

"I will ask Lank and Mrs. Bishop."

"All right. This is Tuesday, is it not? I'll come by to see you Thursday and see what they say."

"Very well, sir."

"I'll have to double up on fees today for I have kept you from several shines I know, so here's a dollar which will square things, won't it?"

"Yes, sir, yes, sir, Judge, I thank you, but I do not want pay for work I have not done."

"Certainly I know that, but I took your time—the time you would have been at work for others, see? Time is money, and it's but fair that I should pay for what I have used of yours."

"But I couldn't have made that much, for you haven't been here thirty minutes,"—as he glanced at the huge clock inside the haberdasher's door, "and besides you've been so kind to always overpay me . . ."

"Not if you get paid for the extra good shines and the newspapers you always have for your customers to read. Goodbye, Daniel. I will see you Thursday."

"Goodbye, Judge, I thank you," and the fascinating

curl again came around his mouth and a smile overspread his face making old the pinched features.

The Judge walked away musing to himself—"there's the making of a diplomat, a general, or financier in that boy—sure as life."

CHAPTER III

"Mary, I know the brightest, most exclusive looking little fellow. I want you to see him, he's a *darling* (as you would say). You would like him. I asked him how he would like to live with us and be our boy. He thanked me very kindly, and said he preferred Lank, his street partner."

"Street partner! What do you mean then by saying he is exclusive? Who is he? What is he?"

"He's a bootblack. Has a chair, a home-made affair, on the street next Meyer's corner. He is very striking looking,—he is intelligent, interesting, straight, and honest. I would like to have him make his home with us if you and he would consent."

"But, Al, we don't want a street urchin. Do you know who and what he is?"

"No, I know nothing of his parentage. In fact, I know nothing about him specially—except my common sense and reason tell me he is all right; and I do know he is a very striking looking little fellow,—I say this advisedly.

"He is undernourished either from lack of food or from improper feeding—both I suspect. He seems to disdain common food—common is not the right word; coarse would be better, for he does like common food the plain meat and bread variety, but he does not like the 'hot-dog' kind. Do not pass judgment until you see and talk with him. I want you to see him in his everyday environment. I want you to talk with him, notice what good language he uses, and how his face brightens and expresses so well his every mood. I am going to see him

at his lodging place one day before long—to be exact, Friday, if his landlady approves. I want you to go with me there, too, sometimes.”

“Al, I love little boys, you know that, but we must be very careful now whom we take into our home. When the grandbaby comes home, he must have good associates. Little Al is a genuine boy, you know, and needs as good, surely no worse associates than he is.”

“True, Mary, no one appreciates that fact more than I, I judge. But I reiterate,—reserve your verdict until you see, hear, and talk with and know this little fellow.”

CHAPTER IV

“Good morning, Daniel, how goes it?”

“All right, Judge Farris, how are you, sir?”

“Fine, fine. I’ve seen the paper—thank you. How about our date for Friday night?”

“Mrs. Bishop won’t be at home, sir, she sews out Monday, Wednesday and Friday nights until ten; but Lank and I will be there and will be glad to have you. She has to sew out some nights, you know, to help Lank out. She gets back about the same time Lank and I get home from school.”

“That is all right about Mrs. Bishop, Daniel, I can see her some other time. I will see you and Lank Friday evening not later than 6:30; that will give us an hour’s visit and will get you to school by eight.

“All right. Lank and I will be looking for you.”

Friday evening at six, Lean and Lank were ready for their visitor;—however, at the last minute Lank discovered they had no matches and rushed to get them.

“Come in, Judge, Lank has gone to the store at the corner for some matches, he did not know they were out until he went to lay the fire for his ‘mar’ to fix breakfast in the morning, he’ll be back in less than five minutes.”

"That's all right, Daniel, where shall I put my hat and cane?"

"Right here, Judge, excuse me I wasn't thinking. I will take them. Have this chair, it will be more comfortable for a large man like you—the one you have will best suit me."

"I believe it will. This one *is* better for me, thank you." Turning as Lank came in the door he offered his hand saying: "This is Lank, I believe, how are you?"

"Splendid, thank you, how are you, Judge Farris? I've heard Lean talk of you so much I feel like I know you."

"So you've been talking about me, Daniel?"

"Daniel! Is your name Daniel?"

"Sure, didn't you know that, Lank?"

"Sure I did not. Bet you can't guess my name. I never once thought about you not knowing my name before. Mar calls me 'son' or 'my man' all the time, so how could you know?"

"Robert. I saw it in one of your old books."

"Yes, Robert Russell Bishop for Grandpa Russell who is dead and for Uncle Rob who lives in California."

All this information was given and received without the slightest attention being given their guest. The Judge sat as a judge; arms laid out straight upon the arms of the chair, feet flat upon the floor, knees together, head erect. 'How innocent, how entirely free from curiosities some natures are. Think of these two boys, living under the same roof for years and not even curious as to the names of each, simply taking each other for their real values regardless of labels,' thought the Judge.

As the boys turned to address him, he crossed his arms and legs, and sat well back in his chair.

"Yes, Judge, Lean does talk about you lots. He thinks you are IT."

"I have a right to talk about you, Judge," stammered Lean, blushing violently, "haven't I? I love to talk about my friends, those whom I like,—don't you?"

"Yes, I do, Daniel, and I am glad you consider me your

friend. That brings us to a nice starting point. How long have you been with Lank and his mother?"

"Nearly three years,—isn't it Lank?" Lank nodded in thoughtful affirmation.

"Where did you live before coming here?"

Lean blushed scarlet, hung his head, but the fascinating curl played around his mouth. Finally he said, as he threw himself in a heap upon the floor in front of the Judge and near Lank's chair upon which he rested an elbow, laid his face against his hand and looked straight into the man's face.

"To be fair with you, Judge, I don't know just who or what I am or where I came from—it's this way." Again scarlet suffused his face and neck, but the pleasant quivers around his mouth prevailed and he looked up straight into the face of his questioner. "When I was about three and one-half years old I was taken to an orphan's home where I stayed until I was about seven; then I ran away." The head dropped. Not a word for some moments. Again looking at his interrogator the amused grin playing about his mouth, he continued:

"I didn't like to be treated like a sick baby, so I left. I thought it all out the night before and had gotten all my clothes together. I put a potato and all the bread I had left from dinner in my blouse. I didn't have anything but two suits—one I had on, the other I wrapped up in the jacket, tied it with the sleeves and left. It was early in the afternoon. I went in the opposite direction from the town to which we were sometimes taken, for fear I would be found and brought back.

"That first night I was very scared, but I had walked all the afternoon and was so hungry and so tired I couldn't go any farther. I shall never forget how I felt when it grew dark and I had nowhere to go, not a place to sleep. I finally crawled under a lady's front door steps. I had seen her come out and close the front door and lock it. I got a good look at her face. She looked kind and I knew she wouldn't hurt me or let any one else

hurt me if she found me under her steps, after I told her why I was there. It was very warm weather, the sand was soft; I used my bundle for a pillow and being so tired I slept well all night long. The next morning I left before she was up. For my breakfast I ate the last piece of bread I had brought.

"I didn't think any one had seen me, but as I was slowly walking up the street and had just about finished my bread, the roughest looking, biggest man I had ever seen grabbed me by my shoulders from behind, shook me hard and said: 'What yer doin' sneakin' from out er Mrs. Dawes' yard this time of the mornin', yer little devil? What yer got in that bundle—? Don't say a word. Yer needn't try to fool me nor deny it. I saw yer through my winder as I was gettin' up, and I watched yer as I dressed—what yer been up to? A little sneak thief I bet my last dollar. Come with me, I'll turn yer over to Jackson, the night watchman—he'll fix yer.'

"At first I was scarced, he looked so big and strong, but when he said night policeman I knew I had nothing that would make a policeman think I had been up to anything wrong, so I got alright again.

"When we got to the place where the night watchman was supposed to be, he had just left on the street car for his home and the cop that was to take his place hadn't come, so the fellow said: 'Open that bag.' I untied the blouse sleeves, he looked at everything, searched my pockets, tore the lining partly out of my cap enough to get his big hand through and said: 'Well, I don't see nothin' yer got this time, but yer beat it, skin out from here quick for if I catch yer on this street or in this neighborhood again I'll make it hot for yer.'

"I wasn't exactly afraid, but I didn't want to make trouble so I left that neighborhood.

"I knew I had to make some money some way and got mad with myself because I thought that everyone would know I had run away from some one because I was too young, too little to work. I went on, though, making out

like I lived around somewhere in the neighborhood. One block I came to, a lady came running out of a house, looked up and down the street. When she saw me, she said: 'Little boy, I'll give you twenty-five cents if you will run to the corner store there and tell Mr. Burk to call the doctor for Mrs. Wilson,—my phone won't work.' She put the quarter in my hand and I ran as hard as I could saying, *Mr. Burk, Mrs. Wilson, Mrs. Wilson, Mr. Burk* every jump for fear I would forget the names or get them all mixed up. I will never forget those names. When I told Mr. Burk and he had 'phoned the doctor, I asked him the price of his apples. I bought a dime's worth (they were five cents a piece, three for a dime), a nickel's worth of cheese and crackers and asked for a drink of water. He looked at me sorter funny and said: 'Buddy, whose boy are you, I don't remember having seen you around here before?'

"No, sir, I just happened to be passing the lady's house when she called me and asked if I would ask you to call the doctor for her, as her 'phone was out of order.

"I was going out the door when he asked again: 'Whose boy did you say you are?' 'Mr. Foster's' I called back and went on. He seemed satisfied and I was, for I had my dinner and supper for that day and breakfast for the next morning bought and paid for and had a dime left.

"The town was much larger than I had expected but I could not get one thing to do. I ate part of the cheese and crackers and one apple for dinner, an apple for supper, keeping the rest for the morning. That night I slept in a wagon body by an old shed.

"The next day a lady—a right nice looking lady—asked me if I was not in too big a hurry would I mind staying and playing right there in her front yard with her little baby boy until she could run down town on some important business. She said she wouldn't be gone more than an hour, her nurse was sick, she *had* to go and had no one else she could leave the baby with. I said: 'Yes,

ma'am, I'll stay with him.' 'Will your mother care?' I said: 'No, ma'am.' When she came back—(it didn't seem like she had been gone any time) the baby cried so hard when I left she called me back and said she would give me thirty cents if I would stay with the baby all that day. I stayed.

"That night I decided I would have to go back to the wagon and old shed. I had started when she said: 'Little man, where do you live? Don't you want me to take you home or call your mother to come get you?' Then I had to say: 'I have no home, my papa and mamma are dead. I just stay about and about.' I was so afraid she was going to ask me whom I was staying with then, —but she didn't. She seemed to be tired or worried. She seemed to be thinking, she looked at me a few minutes then said: 'You played with Bobby so nicely and he seems to like you so much. How about staying with me until the nurse gets better? I will give you a place to sleep, something to eat and thirty cents a day if you will stay and play nice and sweet with Bobby like you did today—; keep him off the street and sidewalk, and take good care of him.' Of course I said all right. I'd do it. I stayed there nearly two weeks before the nurse returned.

"By that time I had enough money saved up to buy a big old chair I had seen in an old furniture junk shop. (That's where I saw the pretty shavings that looked like the curls of your little friend.) I had it fixed up for a shoe shine, bought the other stuff I needed, had a man to haul it through the town and to this side, because I knew the south side would be warmer in winter, then I went to work. About a week after that I met Lank."

Here he paused while he changed his position. He stood up and shook himself as if glad to be freed entirely from the burden of secrecy he had been carrying so long. He then laid his hand upon Lank's shoulder, looked into his face—which was a study of interest and enlightenment. It was the very first time Lank had heard of

Lean's hardships and he was fully sympathizing with every event.

"You tell the rest, Lank," he said, and with the assurance of being obeyed he walked slowly toward the window and sat down in ear-shot while Lank's and the Judge's eyes followed him. The Judge then turned toward Lank who continued the narrative as if no pause had been made.

"A big bully was abeating Lean,—he'd er made two er Lean. I asked a boy what the trouble was and found out it was the bully's fault, so I pitched in and helped Lean out. His nose was bleedin' and one eye was badly hurt—I thought at first that it was out—so I took him home for Mar to fix up. Do you know he hadn't cried one bit!—the bully said that he would beat him until he *did* cry. He was so scratched and bunged up, Mar told him he had better stay with us until he got better. We liked him and as he didn't have any other home I asked Mar to let him stay with me. She didn't care, so he's been with us ever since. He and I got to working together and going to night school. We have learned lots, but Lean's way ahead er me. We are in the same classes; but I am two years older than him and he always knows his lessons better, but he won't let me alone until I get every one of mine as good as I can. It was hard at first, looked like to me I just couldn't learn it, but it's beginning to get easy now, just like Lean said it would when I got the hang er it."

At this point Lank, too, stood, stretched his long, lank, wiry body. The joints of his elbows, wrists, fingers, knees and ankles being entirely out of proportion to the long, slender bones which had been allowed to grow along the line of least resistance. The mother having to work to keep food, clothing and shelter for her and her boy was too weary and too tired to know or see how he was growing. She saw him only a few minutes in the early morning and at night when they sat down to a scant supper—though neatly served and well cooked—too overwrought,

often times to know or hardly care, hence; an ungainly, awkward, knotty, hard specimen was the result. But since attending school, taking the exercises worked out and enforced by the teachers upon such as he; with the many good lessons on proper food, drink, sleep, they drilled into the boys every day,—and with Lean's everlasting coaching, Lank had made marked improvement. His most unattractive feature now was his mop of tawny mane which grew too thick and fast for a poor boot-black's best appearance. It needed constant care and grooming (of which he was not capable) to make it his glory instead of something offensive—the bane of his existence.

Lank had been quick to discern the alteration in his personal appearance as well as the change in his mental ability and was growing very ambitious and energetic to push his advantages. He was seriously contemplating a change in his business.

All such thoughts—mental decisions—were easy to decipher by the Judge as the boy talked on and on unconsciously unfolding his life's history as well as his heart's most earnest desires. The Judge proved a patient, compassionate listener during the half hour.

When Lank got to "going good," Daniel left his post and made a small blue iron-stone china pitcher of ice-lemonade of which he offered the Judge a drink from a sparkingly clean peanut butter glass; and some vanilla wafers from a plate of the same material as the pitcher.

The Judge ate and drank heartily, to the everlasting gratitude of the two boys.

"Boys, I have one more question I wish to ask you. I have absolutely no right to ask it and you need not answer if you do not feel perfectly all right about it. I simply like you both, like the way you conduct your business and your lives, so far as I have been allowed to know. I want to know just how you do it. The question is: (both boys looked straight into his eyes), why do you always wear the same kind of shirt? I can un-

derstand the trousers, but not the shirts; for they are always clean and well pressed and always look like the same shirt."

Both boys blushed as they looked at each other then burst into a fit of laughter—the only part of the program the Judge had not been able to join in whole heartedly.

"Tell the Judge, Lean, *you* tell him."

Again Lean laughed as he answered. "For the simple reason that we have but two shirts apiece and they are exactly alike. I wash one for each of us every night and while Mrs. Bishop cooks supper I boil them on the stove, while Lank presses the other two with the irons she heats for him."

The Judge was thoroughly satisfied with the answer and said: "Splendid, boys, splendid. Another fine example of good results of team work. I thank you for telling me." As he arose he took out his watch to see the time. The boys looked on in admiration. Within his heart Daniel said: "I am going to have a watch, I am going to be, I am going to look and do exactly like that some day."

"I must leave you boys now for it's time for you to be at school—it lacks but five minutes of eight."

The boys jumped up and rushed for their caps and books, the Judge still talking: "I had no idea the time had passed so swiftly—you see how I have enjoyed my visit. I will drive you over so you won't be late." They both relaxed their speed as they went out the door led by the Judge.

The first time they had ever ridden in a "big car." Automobiles were very rare sights in those days. A Ford truck had sometimes given them a "lift"—the driver of the truck being a near neighbor of Mrs. Bishop—but never a car like this. Not a word was spoken by either boy as they sat very erect on the front seat with the Judge. When he stopped to let them out, they thanked him for the ride and his visit asking that he

come again "when Mrs. Bishop," "Mar," would be at home to make it more pleasant.

"Why, boys, my visit couldn't have been more pleasant. I have thoroughly enjoyed every moment of it"—and the boys knew instinctively he had not lied. They had an exalted opinion of "the Judge."

While at dinner the next day the Judge told his wife of his visit.

"Mary, if that boy they call Lean," (he stopped abruptly and told her how the boys, Lean and Lank had received their introduction and names while "Mary," laughed and cried at the pathetic ridiculousness of it). "If that boy, as I started to say, could be persuaded to change his mind and come to us, I believe we would be 'entertaining angels unawares' for the future world and a possible president of this United States of America for this present world. My visit to them was an inspiration to me; created within me a new feeling of respect for the present generation and a profound respect for some unfortunates. You must go with me on my next visit and be convinced as I have been that—

"Beneath the rough, uncouth oyster shell the purest gem may hide," and

"Full many a flower is born to blush unseen and waste its sweetness on the desert air."

CHAPTER V

Lean was never a typical gamin—commonly called street rat—who swarm suburban streets.

He did not jeer nor petty quarrel. He had a temper and when roused to honest anger it was fiery—went off like powder when a lighted match is applied—but unlike powder, in that the flash was not all, only the beginning. Then he became a hornet, a tiger, a wild cat. He stopped at nothing. He would scratch, kick, bite, butt all without the slightest vocal sounds. He would fight till he

was conqueror or until he would fall into a breathless, helpless, lifeless heap where he stood.

Lean could not bring himself to hiss or hoot. If occasion arose where a hiss or hoot would have not been out of place, he would simply emit a soft, guttural sound peculiar to himself, while a smile half of pity, half of scorn would pass over his features.

He could not bear filth of mind or body. If "the boys" were talking of what he considered improper or none of their business, he *made* it none of *his* and walked away humming to himself.

He could not drag the gutters for bits of food carelessly, or unavoidably or unknowingly dropped into them, no matter how choice the morsel, no matter how hungry he was. Not even for a possible silver or a miraculously lost gold piece would he rake in the muck and mire with his fingers or toes.

Once a fellow who had been of the streets, having come into a small fortune on the death of a relative, amused himself one afternoon by tossing small coins into the ordure, muck and slime of the sewer just to hear the spicy remarks and watch the good natured jostling, rushing and struggling of the gamin for the coins. Lean stood complacently by, his hands in his pockets, watching the game with as much interest—more thought—than the headman of the show.

The headman of the show noticed his reticent interest and jollied him provokingly. Lean took the overtures very good naturedly, but without a sound—his eyes and the expression of his mouth gave unmistakable notice that he would not have the filthy lucre.

The manager finally tossed a small coin at his feet. Lean looked at it contemptuously the moment, pushed it slightly from him with his bare toe, then moved his place of vantage.

Several onlookers silently remarked the unusual behavior of the urchin, the look of utter disgust upon his face and burst into a roar of laughter at the discomfort of the man. They ever after knew Lean.

The coin-slinger seemed to grow disgruntled after that; he straightened up, pulled his hat at a rakish tilt, his vest down,—it had separated from his trousers displaying a puffy ring of a soiled, striped shirt, which he adjusted by giving the waistband of his trousers a sudden pull-out pushing the dirty puff down in his trousers the shirt reaching its proper place as much by the contortions of his body as the helping of his hand. He then straightened his tie, gave another tug at his hat and with a smirking, smiling, sliding glance at Lean and the several by-standers, he thrust both fists in his trouser pockets making unsightly bulges and pulls and shambled off.

Fortunate for Lean the other urchins missed that part of the program for some had accumulated quite a few dimes and nickels and an occasional quarter and it would have gone hard with him had they known he was even in part responsible for the cessation of the rain of money.

Lean disdained unwashed hands to the Pharisaical degree of not “transgressing the tradition of the elders” and involuntarily wiped his hands upon a day old paper, parts of which he kept folded and crammed in his pocket for this express purpose, before eating a piece of bread or an apple, anything from his fingers if water was not convenient. The apple, too, was brushed and vigorously wiped with the paper, “for,” he told Lank “I saw a man at a fruit stand polish apples on his apron which he had just used very effectively and noisily for a handkerchief—the apron was already black as a pot with no telling what other kind of filth.” This astonishing bit of information made Lank more careful of the fruit he ate and caused him to use his cap or shirt sleeve occasionally, especially if Lean had just used a piece of paper. Lank was negligent of this important duty, Lean thought, and so suggested more than once.

At that time neither had heard of a germ theory.

Having inherited a perfect, a healthy body; an unselfish, gentle disposition, though held in leash, fettered,

bound fast by poverty, often hunger, Lean's nature remained untarnished,—though he grew very non-committal—very quiet, very observant.

His power and desire to make and accumulate pennies was innate—remarkably so. He deliberated,—at least he gave due thought to everything he bought. When he decided he really needed or wanted a thing, he bought it, paid the price without the slightest tremor or an idea of “jewing.” When he gave pennies (which he often times did) to one more unfortunate than himself, the veritable widow's mite was gladly, willingly, cheerfully, given,—he forgetting the act the moment it was closed.

Lean's desire to learn—learn everything especially of a literary nature, kept his mind and time pretty well employed when not at work. The useful knowledge acquired, automatically placed him (he and the others entirely oblivious of the fact) upon a higher plane than those with whom he associated. And he, as unconsciously, became lawgiver, soothsayer and judge, as it were, among those whom his position in life, work and surroundings forced him to “buddy” with.

Every boy on the “run” liked him, respected him and yielded unknowingly to his will.

Every boy on the “run” knew too if there was an extra dime in the bunch, it was in Lean's pocket.

Lean and Lank's banks were a profound secret—not known even to Lank's mother.

Walking canes, watches and fobs were Lean's weaknesses. He never saw a stick, a branch of a tree any round piece of wood, that an artistic walking cane did not evolve from the rough at once and he was twirling it around his fingers or pushing holes in the sand as he walked and talked. Or he was using it to move a string or straw that happened to obstruct the view or mar the beauty of the way. Or he was using it to draw slowly, deftly up and down the spine of a flea-eaten, hair-tormented dog for the sheer joy of seeing the stiffening back, legs and neck of the dog while gratitude beamed from the

eyes and thanks were unmistakably expressed by the wag of the tail as he stood motionless for fear of disturbing or bringing to an end the heavenly sensation.

Walking canes were not in vogue, but it seemed to Lean he had lived in an age where gentlemen never sauntered forth without a cane.

He *longed* for a “nifty” one.

A jewelry shop being near his place of business, his watch was selected, paid for and worn with dignity—in imagination.

In reality he *did* wear a watch and chain. These he had assembled (after the Judge’s visit) from component parts he had gathered from time to time from different sources.

He prized them very highly, though for reasons he could not have explained, he usually kept these jewels concealed from the general public.

The chain was made of glass beads given him from time to time by his confederates, mixed with a few tiny gold ones he had bought of a companion of like trade, paying a dime and two agates for them. The agates were the joy of his heart. This chain was held in place in his pocket by a curious formation of quartz he had “traded” for. The rock was worn quite thin, was almost round and smooth to slickness and shone somewhat like mother-of-pearl. There had been a dark spot, an imperfect or foreign ingredient in the rock near the edge. This Lean had succeeded in extricating from the main body of the watch by much careful, tedious work, leaving a small rectangular hole through which he ran his bead chain.

Lean always kept this his first watch. It was as the left hind foot of a graveyard rabbit. His good luck piece—his mascot.

As suffering, unfortunate humanity ripens, the manifold deprivations, sicknesses in want, work in cold and hunger often produces sullen, morose natures. Not so with Lean. He was cheerful, bright, surprisingly happy. He seemed always expecting and hopeful of growing to be a man—a worth-while man some day.

He was as yet too young for the utter hopelessness of his position and environ to weaken his desire or to dampen his ardor in the least. But he *did* form the habit unfortunates usually acquire while children—the habit of silence—of carrying a still tongue. His was not the silence, however, produced by fear of punishment, but the silence of being unnoticed—the unquestioned, the nonentity, the unknown,—the nothing of humanity.

With this habit of silence he had acquired much worthwhile worldly wisdom. He was very observant and seemed ever looking for something that would help him up the ladder and hold him there until he could make further arrangements to go higher and he had the happy faculty, innate or acquired, of knowing the better something to take him higher—of seizing his opportunities—as it were.

His hours of lonesomeness and disappointment were relieved often times because of a nature overcharged with good nature, patience and an acute sense of the ridiculous.

Many observations of the passing throngs of humanity, especially those of the “upper 10” interested and amused him very much, but he knew when to draw the veil of not seeing—not knowing—not understanding over his understanding lit up countenance. He knew when to be ignorant of all happenings; to be not astonished, to be not frightened, be not overjoyed or even amused; to be not even sympathetic or saddened — not interested the least—completely oblivious. In other words, he knew when to be a senseless, blind mute.

He seemed to have developed a sixth sense of knowing just when and how much feeling and intelligence to display.

The street upon which Lean had chosen to cast his fortune, was as a long alley, so high and so closely together were the houses of business. His quick, discerning eye had noticed this was the street heavily patronized by the inhabitants coming from the south and east sides

of the metropolis to have their shoes made fresh, their clothing brushed, their hair cut, their faces shaved and otherwisely refreshed before entering the more prominent thoroughfares a block or two farther down. Especially was this true of an afternoon with the young men and a few eminent looking elderly gentlemen.

Though a good financial center for Lean, he could see but little of what he loved to see—God's outside world—the sun, the moon, the stars, the birds, the bees, the flowers, the trees . . .

The early, slight rustle of life beginning to stir for another day; the rays of the early morning sun; the loud squawking of a parrot at the corner grocery; the life giving draught of the first gentle breezes of the day (with which he always filled his lungs), the peeping of a stray flower or clump of chick-weed of the early spring; a few flowers in tin cans or wooden boxes later on. The crackling sound as of thin glass breaking, the cold hush of the bleak winter winds; the dogs shivering, their backs drawn up in a bow, their tails between their legs prowling around the garbage cans; the calls of the milkman; the shivering shuffle of the newsboys delivering the first news of the day to the yet sleeping world—were the sounds and visions of nature Lean was blest with.

So, when a lag came in his business he would go to the extreme edge of the sidewalk, lean as far out as he could, hands rammed far down in his pockets, head thrown far back he would gaze long and wonderingly at the sky, be it fair or cloudy softly whistling to himself. When satisfied he would give a peculiar shrug of his shoulders, turn on his heels with a movement of lifting his whole body and make a sound almost inaudible, which sounded like a subdued prolonged hee-o-o, hee-o-o; but any one hearing would instinctively have known it was the sound of an expression of gladness and happiness, not of worry and sadness; more of an inhalation, an inbibition of God's strength, power, goodness and love, than an exhalation even of contentment.

These periods of relaxation were his vacations.

Not so with Lank. His was the downward grade. His look was down upon a ring in some alley or by-street where with dirty hands, touseled, unkempt hair, ragged clothes, rusty, black, bare feet or rundown, unlaced or untied shoes, he shot marbles with unknown undesirables; or flung horse-shoes or flew kites on Sunday. The flying of the kites was the only vision of heaven he seemed to encourage, if he in fact, saw the blue sky or only the careening kite which seemed at times convulsed with pain or laughter as it cavorted and swayed back and forth twisting and looping its long rag-string tail with a bunch of bitter-weed tied at the end for a ballast as it zig-zagged and convoluted across the sky—now dipping and plunging, now dashing away as it pulled against the string its face exactly parallel with the anxious one peering at it as the boy ran unwinding the string going with remarkable surety over the rough, uneven ground.

This was Lank's trend, these his daily avocations when he accidentally came upon the fight at the time of his first meeting with Lean.

CHAPTER VI

Some months after the Judge's visit, Daniel was forced—or he thought he was—to return the visit and in a way most unpleasant. Rushing up the steps one evening he knocked on the door—to no avail. He saw no bell. He waited impatiently. Finally he noticed the little button, rightly guessed its use. He gave it a vigorous push, which was promptly answered by the butler. Lean was surprised to see a negro so dressed up, but asked if Judge Farris was at home. Being told he was, he asked if he could see him at once. "Judge Farris is at dinner, little boy, can't you go and come again some other time?"

"No, I want to see him *now* and if you will tell him it's Daniel Foster or Lean he will see me." The butler left him standing in the door, but quickly returned.

"The Judge says come right on back where he is. I will show you the way."

Daniel took off his hat—raised his head, straightened his shoulders and marched straight in; his face very red, his hair tousled, his eyes flashing.

No one was in but the Judge and his wife; both were in full evening dress. Daniel's ideas of the angels and heaven were what he saw. Never had he seen, heard, or read of such beauty, such enchantment. He stood aghast, spell-bound. The Judge got up, shook his hand and still holding it led him to Mrs. Farris, who smiled sweetly as she took his hand and said: "The Judge has been promising to bring you to see me for some time, have this chair and Major will fix you a plate."

"O, thank you, Mrs. Farris,—I couldn't eat *here*." Nervously he unconsciously looked at his hands, his feet, his clothes; all, though clean, stood out in strong contrast with the Judge, his wife and the surroundings. "I came on a hurried, private, important business trip about Lank, and I will wait outside, if you will excuse me and if you will have time to hear me, Judge, please."

As he turned his bright, eager, excited eyes from her face to the Judge's she caught the gleam of the irresistible curl of the mouth and was completely captivated, as the Judge knew she would be.

The Judge was quick to see the "change of heart" in his wife and said: "Mrs. Farris is my partner in everything, Daniel, and unless you really insist upon not doing so, you may sit right there, eat dinner with us and tell me your business at the same time."

As he noticed his confusion again, the Judge continued: "Mrs. Farris and I are going to the opera tonight and dressed before dinner. When I was a boy like you I went without a coat and barefooted, too, so you are all right so far as that goes."

"Thank you, Judge, but I can't bear for Mrs. Farris to hear what I came to tell you. I would rather you tell her if—if . . . you think it's all right."

"Are you in too great a hurry for me to finish my din-

ner? If so, I will go with you now. If not, you must eat with us, then I will hear you."

"Thank you, I can't eat, and—I—hate to disturb you, sir,—I *am* in a great hurry—I—will wait for you."

"I will go with you now, Daniel."

The moment they were alone Daniel began:

"Judge, a cop is at Mrs. Bishop's,—he accuses Lank of taking some money and they found it under the mat at the door step. Lank did not take it, you know that as well as I do, he and his mother are nearly crazy." Lean had talked so energetically, so excitedly the Judge had to keep perfectly quiet and still to catch his meaning.

"Excuse me, Daniel, I will be back in a moment." When he returned he said: "I have cancelled all my engagements for tonight,—I'll go with you."

"O, I knew you would! Come on quick, Judge! Lank is so angry (and I do not blame him) he might do something he ought not; so, please hurry! I will tell you all I know about it on the way. His mother is just crying, says she knows he did not do such a thing. She is not crying for that, for she knows he didn't; she is crying because Lank is so hurt.

"Lank wants to fight. He says they know he did not take what does not belong to him. The cops know he would not have put the money under the doormat, if they have any sense at all and they shall not take him to jail just because he has no one to stand up for him; that whoever took the money knew that and they would make him suffer for their wrong doing. Oh, it's bad, Judge! The cop said for Lank to be ready to go with him when he came back from round on the next street where he had to go for a few minutes. So I slipped out while they were arguing, borrowed a bicycle, and ran all the way as hard as I could to get you, for I knew you would know what to do and would do it."

The Judge with Daniel drove up just as the cop was coming out of the gate with Lank—his mother ready to go with him.

The Judge was recognized at once by the man in charge to whom he spoke very pleasantly. "What's the trouble here, Hendricks?"

Mr. Hendricks explained.

"I'll go with Lank, Mrs. Bishop, you stay here with Daniel. We'll look after Lank all right. Hendricks, can't we three go down in my car?"

"I think so, Judge."

"Very well, come."

Lank stood perfectly still almost in his natural pose. He drew back slightly as the policeman stepped nearer. Judge Farris noticing the movement said: "Come with us, Lank, Mr. Hendricks nor I are going to see you wrongfully treated." At once his head went up,—he stepped forward in perfect confidence. The three entered the car and drove off leaving Mrs. Bishop weeping, embarrassed, hurt—but satisfied that Lank would be fairly dealt with.

Fear, anger, wounded pride and sympathy passed in cycles over Daniel's face, but he smiled up into her face, as they turned, went into the house, closed the door and sat down to wait. Very few words were exchanged, both were content to remain silent.

Before nine the Judge with Lank came back.

"Mrs. Bishop, Mr. Hendricks doesn't believe Lank took that twenty dollar bill, but some one did and hid it under your doormat; why, we do not know. I will come for him in the morning. We will ferret this thing out and have the guilty party make public confession before you, Lank and Lean."

"Thank you, Judge. I have never been implicated in anything like this before and am completely stunned,—do not know what to do. It hurts, cruelly hurts, to have my son accused of such a low crime." She smiled through her tears, "I've heard the boys speak so often of you, Judge, won't you come in?"

"Thank you, not tonight, it's too late. Don't any of you worry now. Lank is all right and will continue to be all right. Good night."

"Good night," chorused the three. "God bless you" in a woman's clear, low, trembling voice reached his ear as he raised his hat and walked away.

"The Judge is a wonderful man. I don't wonder at you boys for adoring him," and Mrs. Bishop fell across her bed weeping for relief she felt and bitter hurt.

When Judge Farris stopped in front of the Bishop door the next morning a few minutes before nine, Daniel was out to meet him.

"Judge, may I go with you and Lank to the courthouse?"

The Judge felt inexpressably impressed with the small boy's loyalty; his anxiety to see justice meted out to his friend. He knew, too, what a financial loss it would be for both boys to be away from their work. Placing his hand gently upon the boy's head, he bent it back so as to look into his face and said: "Daniel, I can and do appreciate how you feel for Lank,—of course, you can and may go, but it is my wish that you stay here and get things in readiness for Mrs. Bishop and Lank, or go to your work. You will understand why I wish this when you grow older."

Daniel dropped his eyes, turned and the two walked to the steps where Lank and his mother stood waiting.

"The Judge thinks best that I not go with you, Lank," said Daniel as he approached the older boy, who seemed to have undergone a complete transformation during the night. He stood very erect, as at attention. He was scrupulously clean; his tawny mane, though long, was combed and brushed smoothly, slickly back from the brow, which had the effect of enlarging the eyes, that behind the hair had seemed small and inexpressive. The mouth, though large, was well shaped and now firmly set. He wore the same shirt and jean trousers of the day before, but they were clean and well pressed. The expression on his face read: "Beware, the one who lies on me today. I am now a defenseless boy, but will one day be a man."

As they approached the courthouse Mr. Hendricks greeted them with: "I have handled quick jobs, but I believe this is the quickest shot yet. When I reached headquarters after leaving you last night, Judge, I found Johns here with the colored 'gent' you see with him. Johns happened to be standing just around the corner from the store when the negro almost ran into him as he was hurriedly ramming a paper bill into his pocket. His suspicions were aroused; he followed him. The negro looking back, saw the move to follow him and increased his speed. As Johns looked up after getting his motor started, he saw the negro leave the yard where I later found tracks leading to the steps and to the bill. He caught the negro by heading him off as he came through a narrow alley-like place. This boy you have with you was suspected by the proprietor of the store solely because he was walking hurriedly around the corner and down the street when he rushed to the door upon finding the bill had disappeared. The negro has confessed, told what he did and how he did it. So, as soon as necessary preliminaries are over, you can go home with your mother, little man. We are sorry to have embarrassed you and your mother and I beg your pardon for the part I played, a duty I am under oath to do. I hope you will never have occasion to be this near a jail again."

"Like conditions have never appeared to me before as now, Hendricks. You who are in authority should be very, very careful whom you arrest,—how you accuse people. Some natures are very refined and sensitive, and to be accused like this, it hurts—hurts—beyond all healing sometimes." Solemnly spoke the Judge.

Mr. Hendricks looked with increased interest and understanding compassion upon mother and son, who said not a word. They stood close together, never exchanging glances during the entire procedure.

When they reached home they found Lean eagerly expectant, but surprised at such an early return. He had pictured Lank behind prison bars, subsisting upon bread and water, sleeping upon an iron cot. He had been

miserable. He had spent the time while they were away wondering, planning, figuring how he could make more money,—how he could save more from what he was now making so as to be able to “pay Lank out.”

Lank had said but little to anyone the long hours he had lived under the dark flag. He could not analyze his feelings—did not try—he knew nothing of analysis. While the others were sleeping that night—if indeed they slept—he had been, peering into his future—had made some plans, had revolutionized his brain.

Lank had stoically sworn within himself that hereafter he would use good language. He knew he could if he would think, would put in practice what he had really learned from study and observation and his association with Lean.

Hence, his mother and Lean were entirely taken by surprise—were nonplused a few nights after his trial,—when he emphatically announced that he would shine shoes no more for a living. “I am fifteen years old and large for my age. I can read, write, spell and figure very well—thanks to you Lean—and I am through ‘pressing brick’ on—street corners, baking in the sun, shivering in the cold and rain, half starved; lots of times taking rebuffs from ingrates,—humans in form, beasts in character;—worse still when ‘high hatters’—bums belonging to the upper ten, as well as bums belonging to the lower five; after I have done my very best on their shoes, dusted the dirt and dust from their clothes to have them march off without a penny’s pay, not even a ‘thank you.’ I get angry enough to fight,—to kill them; but, being helpless both as to strength and size, position and influence I have to hold in, hence,—I have learned good lessons in self-control and am a pretty good reader of human nature. I have at least learned to be a human, not a brute; and to appreciate; to be on time and best of all, I reckon, to keep my mouth shut; so after all I have been well paid for my time and services,—I reckon.”

Both Mrs. Bishop and Lean were surprised, dum-

founded at such an outburst of eloquence—to hear such a lengthy, well worded, well delivered speech from Lank. He did not usually make long speeches and what he did make were always more or less ungrammatical; but this was a master speech, masterfully delivered, Lean thought. It was a perfect declamation for Lank.

So, accordingly, Lank left the house early the next morning with Lean but not to his stand on the corner. He bought a morning's paper from a newsboy friend and walked to the Union Station where he could have a seat and read unmolested. He diligently searched the Help Wanted column. He found two openings he thought—he *knew*—he could fill, and several others he would try for if he failed in the “sure ones.” He cut the ads out with his pocket knife. Neatly folding the paper he left it on the seat, walked to a barber shop, had his hair cut short and “the very best way for me”; he then bought a fifty-cent tie, walked over to a mirror, tied it neat four-in-hand, made smooth his soft collar and “set” his cap with unusual care. When outside the store he took the most favorable ad from his pocket read it carefully and began his search. Thirty minutes passed before he found the place. Here he found he was more than thirty minutes late—another boy had been employed. He regretted this, for the place was cool and inviting. He did so need and want the job and was so sure he could have done the work successfully.

The second best place he found only a block from the first. Here, too, he was unsuccessful. The waiting room was full of boys who had been “turned down” and were dragging themselves out. He walked on and on; tried place after place, to no avail. He was discouraged, tired, and hungry. He had but one dime to his credit. He found Lean on his corner. He, too, was somewhat gloomy for he had done but little that morning, had had only three customers, had only twenty-five cents to his credit,—five cents of the thirty made that morning, had gone for a paper.

Lean hardly knew the well groomed, shining Lank as he came sauntering up.

"Have a shine, sir?" he said in a mock courtesy, bowing low indicating the chair by a graceful sweep of his hand.

"I believe I will," and Lank seated himself upon the chair, placed his feet against the rack, and opening the paper Lean had placed in his hand, he leaned back and began reading.

Lean made them "look like new" and accepted the fee, with a "thank you, sir" and the unfailing, irresistible curl of mouth. He slipped the dime in his pocket. The paper was folded and placed upon the rack. They gazed at each other a long second, then Lank went home—Lean to the nearest fruit stand for an apple and orange.

"What luck, Lank?" kindly greeted Lean as he came into the room that evening and near enough to lay the morning and evening papers upon his lap.

"Not much, Lean, how about yourself?"

"Bum, bum, this morning, but on an average this afternoon,—enough for a ten-cent bonus," he grinned as he emptied his tobacco sack upon the table and counted out two even piles of sixty cents each. Pushing one pile toward Lank and into his hand, the other he deposited in his savings box.

Lank leaned his face upon his hand and for a long while eyed the six dimes while Lean began making preparations for the evening's wash. Finally Lank changed his clothes after putting the iron on the stove—the sixty cents still standing untouched.

Supper was soon ready, and somewhat choicer than usual. Both boys were hungry, but somehow Lank could not eat. He talked but little. After supper he worked fast, helped Lean along and when their work was finished said: "Lean, I want you to take this paper and look over these want ads while I take the other. Tomorrow is Saturday and I must get me a place so I can begin work Monday. I am going to use that sixty cents of yours.

I'll pay it back with interest when I get it"; and walking to the table he put the money in his pocket, handed one paper to Lean and sitting down began his search. Lean did likewise. The only sound to be heard was the clash of an occasional dish as Mrs. Bishop was cleaning up the kitchen and the rattle of the papers as they were being scanned. Several ads were marked and after being read by Lank, were cut out.

They went to school and fortunately for them that night, the sessions were cut; letting them home forty minutes earlier.

On the morrow they sallied forth more sober looking than usual. Lank had no work, he needed it, must have it. Lean decided within himself "If Lank fails to land a job today—I'll try my hand Monday." As they separated at Lean's corner he said: "Come by about dinner time if you've gotten your job and we'll go 50-50 on what I make for dinner. If you haven't a job, come by anyway."

"All right, if I am not too tired and not too far off when I quit trying, to get there by dinner."

No job for Lank and no prospects for one when the noon hour came, and he was too far from Lean, too tired, too discouraged to go to him,—so he followed Lean's example in buying a couple of apples and sat on the curbing, by a peanut parcher to eat them. The odor of the parched nuts added zest to his already ravenous appetite. He bought a package and with the apples they made a feast. He wondered if any housewife had tried them together—apples and parched peanuts—they were *good*.

Lean was disappointed when Lank didn't show up at noon and slightly worried when he reached home that night and found he had not gotten home. Mrs. Bishop showed she was worried and when nine o'clock came and no Lank, she became alarmed.

"Where do you suppose Son can be, Lean? You haven't seen him since morning?"

Daniel shook his head thoughtfully. "But don't get

worried or frightened, Mrs. Bishop, if he doesn't come by ten I will go to Judge Farris. He will tell us what to do and the best way to do it. It may be he got a job and had to work late. Lank would call us, I am sure, if we had a 'phone and let . . . "

A car stopped at the door. Instantly Mrs. Bishop and Lean were on their feet, Mrs. Bishop pale as death. They reached the door as Lank was being helped out of a car by two men. He came walking limply, being supported on either side by the men; his right arm in a sling, his head heavily bandaged, the odor of an anesthetic strongly clinging to his clothing. After he was made comfortable and explanations given as to the trouble, the men left, saying the doctor would call in the morning.

"What's the matter, Son? How did this happen?"

"An automobile struck me slightly as I was on my way home, but enough to knock me down. My arm was broken in two places, a gash cut high on my forehead (the doctor had to take several stitches in it) a little hole in the side of my head—it bled lots, but didn't amount to much, will be right sore a few days, the doctor said. I am all right—just a little goofy from so much of that medicine. The lady, who was driving the car that struck me, sent me home. She paid the doctor for fixing me up and said she would pay any other bills necessary for my comfort and welfare. She gave me twenty-five dollars, but I would not take it—I told her I was as much to blame for the accident as she was."

"Who is she, Lank?"

"I forget, kinder funny name. They must be rich for her car was big and fine and she was beautifully dressed. She was scared nearly to death when she struck me down she screamed and cried like she had killed me. I told her not to cry for I wasn't hurt much. A policeman came up—they all talked around. While some one went to 'phone her husband, I was picked up and carried to a doctor's office,—then I knew no more. I don't remember a thing after they began to pick me up until I waked up in this shape. The doctor's name is Holders, I believe.

I have his card in my pocket.” As he pulled out the card several bills came out with it. Lank smiled when he saw the money. “She was determined I should have it—and I do not remember her name and address, but I’ll find out from the doctor when he comes to look me over.”

“Did you land your job, Lank?” whispered Lean the first opportunity.

“Yes, but I might as well not have. I have to use both my hands continuously—and—” a cruel, hurt expression came over his face, his entire body slumped. He lay across his mother’s bed, dozing spasmodically. After a while he got up and dragged himself to his and Lean’s sleeping quarters.

CHAPTER VII

When Lean came to make his home with Mrs. Bishop and Lank, part of the back passage-way had been petitioned off from the rest of the hall by broad boards—which originally was a dry goods box, making a small bin-like room for the two boys. A small, but comfortable bed; a small box for their meager supply of wearing apparel and a chair, comprised the furniture. The bed furnished a seat if both had to sit in the room at the same time. A twenty-five cent mirror hanging on the wall over a box, a comb, brush, glass, two tooth brushes,—were the only accessories; one picture “The End of the Trail,” was the only decoration. The one window, a single sash, had been put in by the two boys and fixed so it could easily be pushed up and down and on the outside of the window a piece of gauze had been tightly stretched and neatly tacked. The window was let down every morning to protect the bed should it rain while all were away at work. One of the first acts of the boys, upon reaching home, was to raise this window, regardless of weather, unless it was pouring rain; which seemed to give so much more room in their close quarters.

Lank walked to the window, leaned his aching head

against the facing and stood for a long while looking at the heavens which seemed clear and bright though but one star was visible—its vestal radiance, soothing, appealing with the soft glow of a clear, full moon.

Lean left Lank to himself for full half hour—he knew how Lank felt. A bright thought took possession of him—“possibly he could hold Lank’s place until his arm and other injuries were healed.” He hurried in and told Lank of his plans. Lank slowly, turned his head, looked at his friend with gratitude in every expression,—he said nothing—but slowly turned from the window, sat upon the bed and with Lean’s and his mother’s help made ready for the night. When both boys were in bed, Lank said: “Lean, I was not to begin work until Monday week—eight days from now,—maybe I can do something then, enough to hold my place; but I must report to my boss day after tomorrow, let him know conditions. I—I hope we can manage some way—to keep the place, Lean, for I do want it so badly—jobs are so hard to get, so many need work—so many anxious for the job I have, I am afraid . . . ” The boys placing an arm around each other finished the sentence.

“How much does it pay, Lank?” after a long pause.

“A dollar and a quarter a day to begin with, with double pay on Saturday if I stay until nine o’clock. I don’t have to be at work until 8:15, get off at 12:15, have forty minutes for lunch, then work until six. The place is near the Journal office, so I stopped in on my way to see if I could deliver the morning paper and got that job too. All together I could easily have made twelve or fourteen dollars a week. Think of it—forty or forty-five dollars a month, Lean! I guess I was so happy thinking about my jobs I was not thinking enough about automobiles . . . ” Lank turned his face away, Lean’s arm still around him, he drew closer. The next hour found them asleep. Lank slept very well when he first went to sleep, from the effects of the opiate, but became very restless in the early morning hours.

Lean went with Lank to the place where he was to have begun work the following Monday. Lank simply and without equivocation told Mr. Rosser, his employer, of the accident. Told him he thought it right to let him know his true condition before time for him to report for duty.

Mr. Rosser was, in the eyes of the world, a successful business man, but in the common jargon of the street he was "hard-boiled."

"I can not dally along with cripples and near invalids—the work has to be done jamb up and you are in no condition to deliver the goods. You might come back when you are fully recovered and if the place is not satisfactorily filled I might then be able to give you the place. But do not come back until you are entirely well."

At this point Lean interposed: "I am his friend. I live with him. Could I hold the place for him until he gets well?"

"No, you are too small, too frail looking to do the work," he snapped, and turning toward his desk the boys knew they were summarily dismissed. They turned quickly toward the exit, and passed out into the street; Lank going to his home, Lean to his chair on the corner.

CHAPTER VIII

As a result of worried sympathy for his unfortunate "buddy" Lean lost several possible customers as he let them pass by unnoticed. The financial results that night showed to what extent his mental worries had interfered with his manual labor—at least a third short of the average. "This will never do. I must add to, not subtract from. I will do better tomorrow. I will be on the job earlier and stay later—we'll pull along some way until Lank is fit again."

The morrow brought on a worse situation in the financial realm of the boys. It began pouring rain just before the day began and kept raining all day—not a rift

in the clouds—not one vision of the sun. Mrs. Bishop went to her work leaving the boys alone with their griefs and sorrows—Lank with his pains and a rise in temperature, caused, no doubt, as much by the worry and loss of sleep over financial conditions as by his sufferings.

Lean made himself a handy-Andy, and tried to make sunshine out of clouds,—tried to make Lank forget; but made, he thought, a miserable failure. The day did end,—as all days will. Mrs. Bishop came home tired and soaking wet. After making herself comfortable, she put on the brisket she had brought from the market which was soon converted into a most savory smelling stew. Lank was especially fond of this stew with toast and coffee,—his spirits revived somewhat as preparations for the meal progressed.

Several days of undisturbed, unmitigated impatience passed. Lank being left alone all day was growing despondent—bluer than Lean had thought possible,—and he too, was beginning to feel depressed.

He walked slowly to his work in deep thought and failed to see the Judge approaching until his cordial, “Good morning, Daniel, haven’t seen you in sometime. How are you?” brought him to his senses.

“Good morning, Judge, I am all right, and you are certainly looking well. How is Mrs. Farris?”

The Judge was promptly installed in the chair, the paper placed at his disposal.

The paper unread lay spread out over the Judge’s knees.

As Daniel was finishing the “splendid job,” which he always did for the Judge, he looked up and catching sight of his own name in the Wanted to Find column, grabbed the paper up, stood very erect as he read: “The wearer of this name Daniel B. Foster, called ‘Lean’ by his fellows, call at No. . . . important. Of special interest to him.”

“Judge could that be *me*, you reckon?” said Daniel excitedly as he turned the paper, holding it so the Judge

could read, indicating the paragraph with a long, tapering finger.

"Yes, sir, it looks exactly like it really means you."

Lean's face flushed angrily, no pleasant curl appeared about his mouth—"Judge, my conscience is clear. I have done nothing wrong knowingly. What does it mean? Do you suppose some one has done something wrong and put it off on me like they did Lank?"

"No, nothing of that kind, Daniel, I am sure. Would you like for me to go with you to find your man? That is the number of Mr. William Brannon's office. I am almost sure—a lawyer I know quite well."

"O, sir, if you only will." The pleasing curve of lips asserted itself as he stood very straight, his hands clasped behind him looking straight into the Judge's eyes.

"It is now eight-thirty,—a very good time to find him in his office alone, I suspect. Suppose we hurry around there now. I have an hour yet before my first engagement."

"All right, thank you, sir," slowly spoke Daniel—he was mentally counting the dimes he would lose in the hour, calculating the heavy loss at the close of the day; but this was the best time possible for him, as the Judge would be with him. He cast all painful mental calculations and reflections aside, placed his chair where it would be least in the way, folded the paper, put it under his arm, put on his cap coyishly (a style all his own) and hurried with the Judge to his car. They got in and were soon at the correct number,—Mr. Wm. Brannon's office it proved to be.

"Mr. Brannon is not in. He is expected any minute."

"We will wait."

After a few minutes, Judge Farris and Daniel were asked back in Mr. Brannon's office. The formal greeting and Daniel's introduction over, Mr. Brannon turned to his desk and from a "pigeon hole" drew out a paper which he handed Judge Farris. The Judge read and passed it on to Daniel trying to imagine, as he did so, just how Daniel would feel as he read and understood.

"Congratulations, my boy," spoke both men each appropriating a hand as he passed the paper back to Mr. Brannon. His eyes grew large with wonder and surprise; he was a little confused and embarrassed. At first he could not remember the old man whom he had helped across the street after recovering his hat, which had blown off and directly under the back wheels of a buggy, leaving it badly soiled and crushed. He did remember, after a little, very distinctly everything that had occurred that blustery, drizzly day—after an unprecedented drought. How vividly now he recalled the slightly bent form of the grey-haired man, whose locks were thin and blew like frayed cloth in the wind; the squint grey eyes which penetrated your every thought, but kindly; the shriveled, brown-splotched, somewhat palsied hand as he took his hat after Daniel had brushed and straightened it; the peculiarly made, soft shoes which he had freed from the loose dust clinging to them from the bespattered rain on the dust laden street. Very distinctly now did he recall how the old fellow had asked his full name and many other questions as he brushed his shoes and the dust from his clothes charging him nothing as he seemed so old and feeble. Now the old man was dead and had remembered him in his will leaving him one thousand dollars. His lawyers had written Mr. Brannon to insert the ad in his home paper requesting him to send in the proper credentials as soon as the party was found . . . "And do you know that ad has been in the paper six weeks and you are just seeing it. Daniel, you and the Judge must not be very close readers." The accused looked each other in the eye and smiled.

Everything being properly signed and fixed, the two left Mr. Brannon's office. Daniel was superfluous with his thanks.

"Well, Daniel, I guess you won't work today—you will want to celebrate your good fortune."

"O, yes sir, I must work right on. I am so happy I feel that I could do a thousand times more than ever now," then his face fell as he continued, "but I would

like Lank to know because . . . ” Then he told of Lank’s misfortunes.

“You see Lank can’t work. I made but little Monday, nothing yesterday, so you see I must work extra hard today.”

“Yes, yes, I see. I suppose so. Rather unusual though at this time of life,” mused the Judge. “Suppose we drive by then and let Lank know before we both have to go to work. We’ll come right back and get on our jobs.”

Daniel looked up into the Judge’s face with the happiest, merriest, most irresistible curve of lips imaginable, “All right, sir. Thank you,”—was all he could say. He leaned back in the corner of the seat, was very thoughtful a few moments as he watched the Judge slowly, carefully, steer his car to a less congested street. When the car was noiselessly speeding along Daniel said:

“I wish I had known that old man. I know he must be, must have been good—very good to everyone, especially to little boys. I certainly do thank him, but I do not think I did anything to even think much about, much less giving me a thousand dollars. I am glad I gave him an extra good shine. I remember how soft and old fashioned his shoes were which made me think he was old and poor. I felt sorry for him and did my very best by them.”

“Don’t you do your best with every shine, Daniel?”

“Yes, sir. By ‘very best’ I mean like I do a customer who sits and talks a little before I give him a dust. Some, lots of them, I am glad when I have finished with them and they are gone . . . A thousand dollars!” Daniel whistled and uttered his hee-o-o, hee-o-o. “Gee, I never expected to have that much money in my whole life at one time! And, Judge, it is too much for me. I am going to give half of it to Lank and I want you to take the other half and keep it for me.”

The Judge looked at the small boy beside him in thoughtful admiration and astonishment. He could not or did not express himself. They were nearing the

Bishop's door. He simply said: "I'll wait to take you back to your work, if you wish it, Daniel."

"If you have the time to spare, Judge, I will appreciate it. I won't be long. Won't you come in?"

"Not this time, Daniel, thank you." Though the Judge would have given lots to have witnessed that meeting, to have seen their faces, heard the remarks; but he felt it would be robbing the boys of the one thousand dollars, so he calmly turned his back to the house, rested one leg across the other and puffed away at a fragrant cigar.

Lank sat all alone thinking over his misfortunes. Three years ago he would not have minded his infirmities—they would simply have meant days, possibly weeks, indoors with nothing to do, nothing to think of, nothing to worry over; merely to eat, drink and sleep. Now he was ambitious, he wanted to make every moment count, stagnation of any nature riled him. He had nothing to read. He and Daniel had read everything in the house several times over—he had nothing to interest, nothing to entertain him. He was as morose as a boy his age could be. His brooding led to action, he *must* do something. Striking the table hard with his fist he jumped to his feet, and in determined voice said: "*I will find something I can do with my left hand and bursted head; I will not sit . . .*"

Just here Daniel came in the door much to Lank's consternation and surprise. The reflection was never finished. Daniel gave not the slightest indication that he had heard Lank's outburst; he handed the paper with the ad heavily marked to Lank indicating unmistakably the paragraph with his long, shapely forefinger. Without looking up Lank read, then reread again. It was time to look up now—"What does it mean, Lean, have you tried to find this number?"

"Yes, I found that number and it means we are worth one thousand dollars, but I can not tell you about it now, the Judge is waiting to take me back to town. I must hurry; I will tell you all about it tonight."

"A thousand dollars! Lean, what on earth are you going to do with all that money?"

"Give half of it to you, the other half to Judge Farris to keep for me until I need it."

"Don't go now, Lean—not to work this time of day. Why it's most twelve . . ." pleaded Lank, but Lean did not hear the concluding remarks, he was getting in the car; he and the Judge were driving off as Lank got to the steps.

"Well, Daniel, as you are such a lucky young fellow, I want you to lunch with me today at this cafe we are now approaching. It is tip-top I know, I've tried it numbers of times. We will go further down where we can park our car out of this crowded district and walk back, how about it?"

"Under these conditions, Judge, that you lunch with *me*,—let me have the pleasure, the honor of spending the first of my good fortune on you."

"You are trying to take advantage now, Daniel," smiled the Judge down into the happy face beside him. "You know it is my turn now. I dined with you and Lank in your home, and besides, you haven't gotten your fortune yet. The Romans had a saying something like this: 'Nothing is certain but uncertainty,' 'What is uncertain counts as nothing.' But we will compromise this way. You eat with me today and when your thousand dollars is *certain*, when you have it in your hands, I'll eat with you that same day."

"All right, Judge, I *was* 'counting my chickens before they are hatched'—wasn't I?"

"In a way, yes. Here's our place."

CHAPTER IX

Lank had not recovered from the surprise of what he had read and heard at Lean's hurried exit, when a loud rap called him back to the door.

"Is this where Mrs. Walter Bishop lives—and is this . . . ?"

"Yes, Uncle Rob, we still live here and I am . . . "

"Well, well I am glad to see you, Robert. But what have you done to yourself? You have gotten to be such a fine looking boy! I can say now without fear of wounding you, you used to be so powerful ugly. Your eyes that I thought were too small and green are fine and large,—look almost brown behind those long, jet black, curling lashes," laughed his uncle slapping him affectionately upon the back, "why you are really a handsome fellow now,—but why the sling and bandages?"

Hurried explanations were given while Lank hustled around trying to make this much loved uncle feel comfortably at home.

"Where is your mother?"

"She's at work. She will be here in a very few minutes now."

"Bob, don't worry about this room. You might hurt your arm, side, or head; it is all right.

"How would you like to go home with me and live—at least until your arm and other afflictions are all well?"

"I would enjoy it, Uncle Robert, but I don't think mother and I could leave now."

"Why?"

"We have a boarder, a boy nearly my size; he has to work every day. He has been with us a long time—he has no other home."

"Couldn't he come too?—the more the merrier. I could certainly use him to his and my advantage if he would."

"I don't know, Uncle Robert, I can't tell about Lean and he won't be home before six or six-thirty. He has been too good to me and mother for us to leave him. He is all the help we have had since I have been lain up—oh, you don't know how very good and helpful he is and has been to us."

"I think I could make things so interesting for him—you—for us all, that possibly he would be willing, even anxious to go with us."

“Possibly so,—here comes mother, you and she can talk it over,” and he quietly left them —rejoicing in the thought that something *now* would happen he was sure, —something would be found that he could do with one arm, dilapidated head and side, to help make a livelihood. He walked out on the back porch where he could take as full, deep breath as he felt was necessary that he must take and expel it without inference; he then drank two glasses of water before he felt he could return to the room and hear the blessed tidings which his uncle bore. He knew they were blessed, if brought by Uncle Robert.

He found his mother sobbing. Lank had seen his mother cry, but always softly to herself—he had seen her when he knew she had *been* weeping, but it was the first time he had seen her so audibly affected. He soon understood they were tears of joy; he also saw that his mother was ready, anxious to do her brother’s bidding.

Mrs. Bishop had known for sometime that some change would have to be made or they would be forced into the street. House rent, though small, had to be paid regularly—oh, so regularly; water, grocery, meat, clothing and shoe bills! She could not see how she could manage longer—something had to happen. She had put on a brave front, seldom had she been forced to allow the boys to see her in tears,—for Lean and Lank were doing all they could, but because of this accident to Lank—she had not been able to see how they could possibly pull through this time. Mrs. Bishop had passed the point in living poverty where a garment, when wearing out, is held up to the light for one last inspection, and with some degree of satisfaction could say in her mind as she beheld the garment, “Yes, you can stand one more wear, one more laundering, then to the rag-bag. And what a nice, soft, useful cloth you will make for cleaning when the buttons are cut off. Yes, next week I will do some extra cleaning. I hope when you are ready for the rag-bag it will be nice, clear weather, so we can accomplish much.”

No, she had reached the stage of poverty where the

decay, the deterioration of a garment was a dire calamity—stark tragedy. Now the sun was pouring in, her heart was at flood stage, too full to hold more; so it was overflowing as she without comment listened to her brother explain the “Open Sesame.”

“This is the situation thus far, Lydia: Laura’s father died last August, leaving his immense holdings in a mess. At last his affairs have been straightened out and settled. She has that large truck and dairy farm on her hands as well as bank stock and other interests. She wants me to swap places with her as she can not look after so much especially the great number of laborers she must necessarily employ. We are to pool everything and share everything equally.

“Some labor is so uncertain, so unsatisfactory I would not think of undertaking such a thing until I could see you and find out if you would come in with us and oversee the milk rooms. Do no actual work, just see that the machinery—everything is scrupulously clean, in good working order so as to make it and keep it an A No. 1 affair.

“As delivery comes so early and late, Bob could be on the delivery wagon both morning and evening to see to right delivery, until we can get the help trained to the efficiency necessary for successful business from the start. It will not interfere with his school duties and will be beneficial to him in his present battered, run-down condition; it will be splendid training for him while he is young.

“This will be a flattering business if we keep well and can keep it going as I know we can.

“The chicken and egg proposition is a huge business within itself. The food for both cattle and chickens (hence the families) is raised on the place and you and Bob can make it as prosperous as you like. We had thought of turning that part of the business over to you. I will look after the truck and cattle and all heavy outside work.

“We are to pay Laura a regular monthly stipend be-

sides her prorata in profits as she has been the means of making all this possible for us. Her house is large—entirely too large for her now, so we've decided to let the head overseer — (who has a large family) — have her house, so he'll be near enough for my close oversight. The house is some distance from my home—far enough so we will be free from any unnecessary or unpleasant, disturbing noises. My house is much smaller and is so much more conveniently arranged for a small family, is much better suited to our needs. There's a most complete little bungalow, about two hundred yards from it which suits admirably for you, Bob—and your friend, if he chooses to come. That is a brief, a scattering outline of the plans thus far hurriedly arranged.

"I hastened to lay these suggestions and plans before you, so as to give you ample time to consider every phase of the question before deciding. Ask me any questions you wish to know. The conditions are new (comparatively so) to us all and we want to, *must* look at them from every angle before we commit ourselves too far.

"I have a business engagement now which will keep me possibly several hours,—hence, I may not be able to see you again before morning. Do not be too hasty in your decision. I want you to be absolutely fair to yourself, Bob and your little friend. If you can see your way clear to accept this complete change just now, I think you will find it pleasant and to your profit. The place is only twenty miles out, as you doubtless know, just a few minutes' drive in.

"I must be going now or I'll be marked late, *late*. Good bye, I will see you in the morning not later than 8:30 or 9:00 as I must be back home before 6:00. I will have lots and lots of red tape to unwind and wind regardless of how you decide"—and taking his hat from the table upon which he had placed it when he entered the room, he hurriedly left.

Mrs. Bishop was bewildered with bright prospects for a happy future for her and her boy. She and Bob at once began to discuss the problems,—which, to Mrs.

Bishop's amazement, were much larger than she had at first thought, as huge and wonderful as they were. She found Bob remarkably level headed for his age and discussed each phase of the question with a clarity of precision which delighted her already happy heart. He showed her wonderful avenues of opportunity that would naturally open up before them as they passed in his mind's eye down the vista of years.

They knew this brother and uncle was entirely trustworthy; capable, competent and able to accomplish any work he saw fit to undertake. He had been their help several times in their extremities, in fact his help had been marvelous, considering the difficulties under which he had labored, the heavy burdens and crosses he had borne since reaching man's estate. For the past ten years he had been forced to live in California where he had lost his entire family—a wife and five children and his small estate. How he had managed, no one was able to see, except that his every act was open and above board. And now he had come home to begin life over again and he seemed in such wonderful spirits. Seeming physically and mentally, fit to conquer the world—certainly his world.

Mrs. Bishop had fully made up her mind to accept her brother's propositions. She felt she certainly could do no worse than she was now doing—she was sure she saw bright prospects for better times for her and her boy.

It was the last of the month. It was time to renew rent notes and make arrangements for another year. She banished these from her mind. She felt confident she would never again have to worry about rent and rent notes. The relief from the burdens she had carried for so long showed on her face; her eyes brightened, her step became elastic and quick and her merry laugh rang through the house,—an unheard of sound in the home.

It had been a hard, bitter fight for the young mother left with a small son and but little of the world's goods.

Mr. Bishop had been a hard working young mechanic. They were only just beginning to get their heads above water. They had paid the second installment on a neat,

new home; he was on his way to make a third payment—had stopped in a physician's office to have the necessary examination for an increased life insurance policy, when a stray bullet from a rowdy, drunken crowd at a corner grocery struck him. He lingered for six weeks, then passed away leaving the young mother and baby. The little savings, the home, had to go to pay doctor, hospital and mortuary fees and to sustain them until her baby was old enough for her to leave to work at anything available.

When Daniel came home from his work quite an excited mother and son greeted him. Supper had been entirely forgotten—a glass of milk with wafers and a cruller had to satisfy.

Daniel was mistified while the situation was being explained. He did not express himself. Within his own mind he had persuaded himself he would decide nothing until he could talk with Judge Farris.

Tumultuous, joyous plans and anticipations reveled in the heart and brain of the mother and son,—the only impediment being the non-committal attitude of Daniel. They wanted him to be as happy over their prospects as they were,—“he would have to go with them, they would not leave him alone.”

The following morning every one was up and about remarkably early though they had retired unusually late and slept but little.

Daniel left for his work in a brown study, he was exceedingly quiet and not a little bothered, for he knew not what he would do without his friends — without “his buddy,” “his pal”—his home. Yet he had definitely decided he would abide by Judge Farris' decision.

As he neared his place of business he inwardly prayed that the Judge would come by. If he did not, he would be forced to go by his home—a thing he disliked to do under the circumstance. He could not decide this question alone which involved so much in his young life.

The minutes seemed hours as he sat waiting for cus-

tomers. He was about to give up hopes of seeing the Judge and began making preparations to go to his office or home, when the object of his thoughts gently tapped him on the shoulder saying: "Moving to another corner, Daniel?"

"No, sir, I was waiting for you."

"Waiting for me?" looking into his face, the Judge knew something was radically wrong with Daniel. "Why, my boy, what's the matter? You seem worried? If I can help you in anyway speak up."

"Judge, it's a long story and I would like for us to be in some less public place so we can talk without being disturbed. Let me 'shine 'em up' good and we will find a place."

"I don't need a shine so badly, do you think? We can go now, just around the corner to the mezzanine floor of the Windham Hotel and be quite private."

"You come first—your shine" and in silence the work was well done; in silence the material, with chair were pushed well out of the way; in silence the two went to the hotel. Daniel drew up two chairs—he sat facing the Judge and told his story. The Judge was again a patient, interested, sympathetic listener. Daniel concluded his remarks with: "Now here is where you come in, I want your advice. I want to be where I can attend the best schools at the least expense, for,—now I know you will think I am clear off, presumptuous—or whatever that word is, but when I am a man I want to be a judge just like you, marry a woman just like Mrs. Farris and have a home just like yours."

The sincerity, the candor of the boy kept his remarks from seeming ridiculous and the Judge gravely said as he placed his hand upon the boy's knee, "I thank you, my boy, for that compliment and sincerely hope your every aspiration will be fully realized and far surpassed as they will and must, for times are changing rapidly. I have many faults and shortcomings, these you must see and avoid. I've had many trials and temptations which I have overcome to a great degree, but not to the extent I

could and would have had I been a stronger, better man. Remember this Daniel, 'man is like a pin he will bend under too much pressure.' Take and use all the good you see in me, but shun my faults; flee from them. I know I seem big, prosperous, wonderfully successful to you, and I *am* reasonably so (much more than I deserve) for which I am humbly grateful—, but you can be bigger, finer, more prosperous, more wonderfully successful than I have been and I have not the least doubt but that you will be.

"As for your wife, I can wish you no greater happiness or luck than that she should be as good, as satisfactory, as altogether wonderful and helpful to you as Mrs. Farris has been to me. Your home can be just what you will it, if you work to that end."

Here he paused for a while. Daniel, with questioning eyes, looked straight into the Judge's down-cast, thoughtful face.

"Daniel, if you want to be where you can get the best educationally, this is the place for you, and I again offer you a home with Mrs. Farris and me. She and I will be delighted to have you and we will do all we can to make your life happy; to make you a useful, a worthy citizen. We will be glad to help you take advantage of every opportunity presented you. Don't let the question of a home bother you,—ours is open to you. Your friends will be near enough for you to keep in close touch with them, they with you, so you need not give up your love for and interest in them. On the contrary you doubtless will be in a position some day to help them more if you remain here and apply yourself, than you could were you to go with them to the country. I think the offer they have is marvelous, and to include you in it is thoughtful goodness itself. I am truly glad for them. I think there are the makings of a fine, splendid man in Lank. I think he has a noble mother, and a good mother is the most wonderful institution in this world; but if it is schooling, educational advantages you most desire, then stay here,

you can find no better advantages along that line than right where you are."

To the Judge's utter surprise, Daniel was crying; his low bent head did not hide the rain of tears. Very gently the Judge continued:

"The love and respect you have for Lank and his mother are very sincere and beautiful, not one atom would I lessen those feelings, if I were you. I am sure they entertain the same feelings for you. Gratitude, sincerity, love and respect are the most beautiful attributes on earth today—cling to them, my boy, cling to them. 'Grapple them to your heart as with hoops of steel' and whether you ever have another thing to brighten your life or make the world a happier, better place for you to live in—that will be the beacon light which will never be dimmed through time or eternity."

Smiling through his tears, of which he was not now ashamed, Daniel said, as the Judge paused: "Judge, I would never leave them if they stayed here, nor would I leave them if they were going far off where I could not see them often. At least I can know they are near. But I believe things will change up for them when they live in a new place and I could not love another home with them as I love ours now. As I do want an education more than anything on earth. I reckon I had better stay here. But Judge, I can not live at your home; how far would five hundred or a thousand dollars go in paying my expenses!"

Appreciating the delicate feelings of the boy the Judge offered:

"Why can't you borrow from me as other men do, paying me back as you are able?"

"Can I do that and will that be satisfactory to you and Mrs. Farris? Can and will you trust me for that long? You know it will be a long, long time before I will be making even a living. But if you will let me come under, oh, I can't think of that big word, but if you will let me come that way, I promise I will pay you every cent with interest and I will be so glad and happy. Oh, I

do so want to do just that!" Looking quickly up into his companion's face for his answer, the Judge sedately said:

"Certainly I will trust you. Certainly I can wait on you until you can pay me back. The only difficulty I now see with you, Daniel, is you putting off beginning to pay until you are grown. Why can't you begin as soon as you come to us? It will be lots easier and more satisfactory than having such a large sum banked up against you."

"Sure I would like to begin at once, but look how little I make, only a dollar a day sometimes, except on your days," the alluring curl took possession of his mouth, "and that wouldn't even start it."

"A dollar a day! why how much do you think you are going to use? Of course, your first expenses are going to be right heavy—getting clothing, shoes, school supplies, et cetera, but after that I should think it would be easy sailing. Suppose you accept a job I can offer you which will pay more than your present one and you can be out of the weather, can select the best, most convenient times to do the work; however, the work is much harder and will keep all your spare time pretty well taken up."

"I don't mind hard work, I'd love it and I will do anything you want me to do or think I can do. What is the job?"

"Couldn't we discuss that at lunch, do you know it is one o'clock?"

"O, sir, I do not bring money with me mornings and I have made but little this morning. I will wait for you here or anywhere you say, unless you can tell me before we go. I do not wish to keep you waiting though."

"Well, if I stay and tell you of the job you will have to go lunch with me. Is it a trade?"

After a short pause Daniel looked up with the expression of one knowing he was being tricked, but pleasingly said: "You got me that time, Judge, guess we can trade."

"All right, here goes. Our lawn has to be mown once

a week; the flowers, shrubbery, vines have to be pruned and trained; a few choice fruit trees need careful attention. I have to pay some one to do it and I had just as soon—rather—pay you than any one I know. If it is done right, as I will expect you to do it, it is a man's job, and I will pay you as I would any one else."

Daniel was visibly, woefully disappointed. "Judge, I would do that, expect to do that for nothing. I would be glad to. I thought you meant a sure enough job."

"Don't you consider that a 'sure enough' job? If you do not now you will, for it *is* one—a *big* one. I do not work for nothing—I want to be, must be paid well for my services. I demand it or I do not do the work. Every man should be able to 'deliver the goods,' be able to do the work he puts himself in line to do, and do it well—then receive his pay; demand it. If they all would, the world and the inhabitants thereof would be better off. Crimes would become less; anarchy fade away; strife and dissention cease to a marked degree; strikes become history. It's my impression that most working men—the laborer, is uneducated, unskilled, inefficient; slights his work, *kills* time. The employer is held, must be held, responsible for shoddy work; he refuses to pay until work is done according to agreement—the workman claims underpay; hence, neglected work. Some paymasters *are* inefficient, I grant, some are "hard-boiled," seem almost soulless and unfeeling; but, the cases that have come under my jurisdiction and observation have, in the majority of incidents, been forced to use the means employed—extreme measures have to be used or the fabric which holds the commercial world in balance would be torn assunder. Hence, my advice to you, my son,—no matter what work you choose, whether laborer, professional, diplomatic or what not—(one is as good, respectable, honorable as the other, depending entirely on how the work is done)—*know* your line and *do* it better than any one else; then claim the reward such services demand.

"Now back to our main topic. The little jobs about the

house such as feeding the chickens, canaries, fish, my bird dogs, things like that—that's different—you will then be as our son—see?"

"Yes, sir, I think I understand and I will do my very best to please you and Mrs. Farris."

"Well, as that's all satisfactorily settled, we can eat, can't we?"

"Yes, sir."

As they reached the avenue Judge Farris asked: "When is this change to take place—when are the Bishops leaving? When can you come to our home?"

"Right away, I think. At least that's the way it sounded to me. It is the first of the month and new arrangements must be made about rent and other bills, Mrs. Bishop said."

"So much the better, so much better for, you see, school begins within the next few days and you want to be straightened out, get your bearings, understand? And let Mrs. Farris or me better perhaps, help you get your wardrobe ready for school."

Such talk, produced such glorious thoughts. Daniel was too happy on his own personal account, too miserable at the thought of being separated from his friends, to desire food. Think of a *wardrobe* for himself, he had never heard of the expression before! Think of going to day-school and with everything that is necessary for the best work! He *could not* eat.

The Judge fully appreciated the situation. But he had gleaned from the boy's conversation that there had been a very light supper,—he was sure breakfast had been equally as light, so he steered the boy's thoughts into another channel while waiting to be served and was rewarded by seeing the food heartily, almost unconsciously disappear as they talked,—

"As both you boys are getting big I think it would be fine for you to call each other by your names. In fact Lank has grown out of his name, he is certainly lank no longer—he has developed into a fine looking, well proportioned youth. I don't think I have ever seen anyone

develop as fast nor as satisfactorily as he, and I am going to see to it that you outgrow your pseudonym Lean; so let's begin now with Robert and Daniel or Bob and Dan—either are fine—personally I like 'short names, Bob and Dan, sound splendid; but 'Daniel,' you know, means 'divine Judge'—so if you are to be a judge you had better be a good one and stay Daniel—how about it?" He glanced interrogatively at the boy who was both pleased, interested and amused, as he answered.

"As you wish, sir. I am sure that will suit Mrs. Bishop for she never did like calling Robert, Lank, though she did it sometimes. It won't make any difference to Robert and me, though I have always loved to hear you say Daniel—Mrs. Farris, too."

As the meal drew to a close Daniel turned the menu card so he could scan it. Noticing the movement, though so slight, Judge Farris asked if there was anything else he would like.

"O, no, sir, I don't remember ever eating so much at one time in my whole life,—it was all so good and I thank you ever so much." Looking up he saw the Judge had seen him scanning the card, embarrassed he continued very hesitatingly. "I—I—was looking to see what they charge for sandwiches."

"What kind of sandwiches do you want, Daniel?"

"O, none for myself, I have already eaten too much. I—I was thinking of Lan . . . of Robert and Mrs. Bishop . . ."

"Did you get the prices?"

"No, sir."

"Well, let's see! 'Fifteen cents each for ham and egg and chicken salad,—twenty-five cents, large club—15 cents each, cheese and pimento and tomato with breakfast bacon.' Which do they like best?"

Daniel's face burned red, his eyes misted—"Robert likes club. I don't know which Mrs. Bishop likes best . . ." and the fifteen cents in the tobacco sack in Daniel's pocket were as leaves—how inadequate for his heart's desire, though small!

"Suppose we get two of each, then they can select what they want.—Here boy! Bring us a couple each of these sandwiches, wrapped separately and in a neat package, a small box is all right. We want to take them with us."

Daniel swallowed hard, folded and refolded his napkin, finally placed it in a badly crumpled state near his plate as he said in low, grateful voice, "Thank you, —Judge, I'll pay you back some day."

Completely ignoring the remark the Judge talked on as though just completing a sentence. "Daniel, if you are to have your job with me I want you to begin right away, say not later than Monday. This being Friday the 27th, no, let's see, this month has thirty-one days, making the first come on Tuesday. Let's say Tuesday then, you move in Monday. We can dispose of your shoe-shine apparatus now. Let's begin at the bottom and work up. . . In the meantime come in here to this desk and sign this paper. I was about to forget the prime reason for my call on you this morning. Here is your thousand dollars.

"Judge—can—will—you sign it for me? I do not believe I can write—my—name."

"O, yes, you can, that's all right, sign right on this line. It would be forgery if I did it and you wouldn't want that, besides it wouldn't work, see?"

The name was legibly written while Daniel was experiencing the most peculiar sensations imaginable. No king on his throne, no potentate was ever richer, prouder, more grateful, more humble,—happiness unalloyed was his fate as his pale, trembling long hand received the paper from his friend, his benefactor. Never had the Judge spent a happier, more satisfying hour.

"The first thing a man does, or should do, when he changes his place of business, Daniel, is to leave his place clean, his name free from debt; pay his respects to and bid good bye those with whom he has been associated, wishing them good health and good luck. That

is what you and Robert should do. Now suppose we take them this lunch and . . . Have they milk?"

"I think so."

"Well, to be safe we had better go by this cafe and see if we can get some, then we'll drive out, take it to them and after they eat, bring Robert back with us so we can dispose of the shoe-shines, and finish up down here. We don't want business to lag. I must stop by my office enroute to see how things are moving along and to give some orders, it will only detain me a few minutes."

The Judge occupied "the few minutes" in calling up a junk dealer, making arrangements with him to take the "shoe-shines"; told him just how he wished the business part of it "pulled off,"—"accede to every proposition I make and I will settle the account with you later;" and in having a fruit dealer fix up a nice basket of fruit, which he deposited on the floor of the car with the lunch. Taking the wheel they slowly drove off.

Daniel was dazed, not one word could he utter. Uncomfortably stiff he sat until the house was in view, then his hands went through the washing movement, his eyes flashing. The irresistible smile overspread his features, as his face began to crimson.

The Judge drove close to the curbing, he ordered Daniel to bring the lunch as he took the basket of fruit putting the milk in it.

"What wonderful fruit, what a beautiful picture! Oh, Judge Farris,—and sandwiches and milk! How thoughtful of you! How can I ever thank you! Good fortune has been heaped upon us in such undreamed of proportions and in so many ways in the last twenty-four hours, I am beside myself, don't know what to say or do," the voice and eyes mellow with tears.

Mrs. Bishop had appeared old, at least in middle life to the Judge until now. When she looked into his face with grateful eyes, shining with unshed tears, her lips aquiver, he could picture a beautiful young woman before sorrow, responsibility and care had transformed the

face and body into the tragedy of premature age and suffering.

"You have Daniel to thank, Mrs. Bishop, for this thoughtfulness. We were coming out on a little business and brought these along to save time," he smiled. "I understand you have had a splendid opportunity offered you and I believe you have accepted — I congratulate you and Robert." Robert glanced up quickly as the Judge pronounced his name.

"Daniel is going to dispose of his shoe-shine business and thought Robert would like to do the same. If he does we will take him with us." Turning around he looked first at Robert then at Daniel and continued, "Daniel, shall I tell Mrs. Bishop and Robert of *your* contemplated change?"

"Please, sir," pleaded Daniel as he dropped his head, took his cap from a chair and placing it for Mrs. Bishop, another for the Judge, sauntered to the window and stood looking out.

"Suppose you bring that table, Robert, get a couple of glasses and plates so you and your mother can eat your lunch while I explain. Daniel and I have the advantage, we've had our dinner."

Daniel brought the two glasses and plates, while Robert placed the table and a chair for himself. They enjoyed the meal, using a bunch of lovely grapes for desert, while Judge Farris told earnestly of Daniel's prospects.

Robert was torn between pleasure and pain. His prospects for being with and seeing Daniel often were good which ameliorated the situation considerably.

When the meal was finished, the Judge took the boys to the junk dealer who, after some dickering on the part of the boys, made a bid for the paraphernalia which the Judge rejected and had him raise the bid, which was accepted. When the money was handed over,—the most real money the boys had ever held at one time, they thanked both men, pocketed their money as they looked

each other straight in the eye, a curious, undefinable smile playing round the corners of each mouth.

"Well, boys, does this end our business for today? Or, is there anything further we ought to do, after you see your friends and pay up any indebtedness? I really think we have done a big day's work—a great job. We can't tell how great until the end of time, for both your lives will be materially changed by this move." Consulting his watch he continued: "If there is nothing more we can do I am going to leave you boys, as I have an engagement at 3:30, another at 4:00. I'll have time to drive you home now if you wish to go."

The boys looked at each other, then at the Judge as Daniel said: "Judge, I have never been so happy in all my life. I can't stand to be this happy much longer. It is best for us—for me—to walk home—walk and walk for me to get straight. I thank you. Maybe I will be able to tell or show you sometime, how I do thank you. We owe no money, do we, Bob?" To which Bob, with grateful thanks replied in the negative, continuing: "I, too, Judge Farris. The past thirty-six hours have been great for me. I appreciate what you have done for Lea . . . , Daniel, mother and me. Thank you, sir, and good bye," and both boys raised their caps respectfully as the Judge smiled, raised his hat in recognition of their courtesy and hurriedly walked away. He knew the boys would live a thousand transcending years in the next few hours. He could imagine the joyful feeling of Robert, as he looked inquiringly, wonderingly, interested, as Daniel pulled the strip of paper from his pocket which made him a millionaire. He could see them as they took the money from their pockets and counted it; Robert's pile being somewhat larger (the Judge had willed it so) and Daniel was glad—Robert had been so worried and for so long.

No happier boys could have been found than these two, who had done everything the Judge had recommended them doing, then went slowly, but straight home, where they found the lady whose car had knocked Robert down,

with the physician who had dressed his wounds, waiting for them.

Mrs. Winthrop was graciousness itself. The doctor affable, gentle and kind. He took Robert to another part of the house and began talking in low voice as he looked over and redressed the wounds. "These are healing nicely, are almost entirely well. The arm can come from the plaster, but must still be tightly bandaged and well cared for."

Then in lower voice: "Mrs. Winthrop wants to remunerate you some way, young man, for the suffering, pain, and deprivation she has caused you and asked me to ask that you accept this check from her and Mr. Winthrop. She is a most excellent woman—is quite wealthy, and I think—I am sure—she will feel very hurt, if you do not accept it. It will take some of the feeling of responsibility for the accident away from her if you will. She likes you and it will actually be doing her a great favor if you will accept it."

"It was purely an accident, doctor, she was no more responsible for it than I was, I don't believe, and it is not right for me to take her money especially as she and Mr. Winthrop have paid all doctor and medical fees—they have done their part."

"That may all be true, but *you* got hurt, *you* suffered, *you* were kept from your work and in these days of the high cost of living that means much. She feels that way about it and I advise that you take the check for her peace of mind and conscience."

"I don't think it right to take it; however, let me talk with my mother a few minutes. I'll be right back." The doctor busied himself with his surgical dressings and bag the few moments Robert was gone. "Mother feels about it as I do, doctor, we can't accept the check. It is true I could not work and that put us up against it somewhat, but we pulled through all right, for which we are very grateful, you don't know *how* grateful. I truly appreciate and thank you for what you've done for me; you made a good job of my arm, for it's straight and is

as good as new except very weak. Mother and I appreciate and thank the Winthrops for their interest and help; tell them how very much, please."

They walked toward Mrs. Winthrop and Mrs. Bishop. Mrs. Winthrop arose as the doctor made ready to go. Robert spoke with her, thanked her for her exceeding kind thoughtfulness; but her check, he could not accept, did not think it would be right, as she was no more responsible for the accident than he, and she and Mr. Winthrop had done their full part in paying the expenses made necessary by the accident.

Mrs. Winthrop's estimate of merit was enhanced as she understood the situation, saw how hard and close they must live and harder still on account of Robert's inability to work. She wished him to accept the check, nevertheless she thought a hundred per cent. more of him and his mother for refusing it. She showed her admiration in the charming glow of her pretty uplifted face, also her disappointment in not being able to help, and as a last resort she said: "Won't you take it, if only the next hour you put it to some charitable fund?"

Robert immediately held out his hand and took the check, much to his mother's consternation, stood before the doctor and said:

"Doctor, there's a little blind boy living down the way about two blocks. He and his mother, the entire family, have been sick. They are too poor to have a doctor regularly or the right kind of food or attention; will you promise me and Mrs. Winthrop you will go to see that family and furnish them with the right kind of medicine and put a nurse there and keep one there, as long as this money lasts?"

"I certainly will, young man. I'll go you one better. I will continue to treat them and furnish proper drugs until every last one of the sick is well, if this money doesn't hold out long enough. My services will be free. Is that satisfactory?"

"Yes, sir, perfectly," spoke Robert and Mrs. Winthrop in unison.

"We will make our first call now if you will go with me to show me the place."

"Sure. Want to go, Dan?"

"No, I believe not, this time."

"Will you go with us, Mrs. Winthrop or shall you wait here?"

"I believe I will go, doctor."

While the trio was gone, Daniel showed Mrs. Bishop his "thousand dollar slip" and the money he had gotten for his "business," telling very interestingly about the whole transaction, the while Mrs. Bishop's soul rejoiced. Putting a hand upon his sleek, brown head, she reverently said: "Daniel, we have much for which to praise and thank our God, and we do praise 'Him from whom all blessings flow,' don't we? I have not been so supremely blest and joyous since Robert's father's lifetime. I have been tried by the taunting finger of poverty, at times,—not being able to see where the next meal was coming from for my baby and me and too ill to move, until often I was almost desperate;—on the very verge of committing a deed which my distracted brain would suggest, and I surely would have put an end to our suffering had I not known that I should never be forgiven, that I would no doubt have to suffer worse in the hereafter than I was then suffering; 'thus, conscience made a coward of me, not too great a coward to commit the deed'—no, no, but too great a coward to endure worse agony, pain and distress than I was then enduring. At such times I would repeat with Abraham Lincoln, 'this too will pass.' I loved to think of that, for I knew that great and good man had been as poor, doubtless had suffered as much as I. It *has* passed. Don't lose hope of something better, though in an ocean of despair, when vast expanses of nothing surround you. Keep hoping, it will keep you living and moving somehow,—Daniel, don't *ever* give up, don't *ever* lose your hold on Almighty God . . . "

When Robert came in he found his mother, one arm encircling Daniel, their heads bowed upon a table weeping.

The little home was scrupulously clean and neat as was Mrs. Bishop. How fresh, young and charming she looked in a new, well-fitting house dress! How Daniel loved and admired her, as far as he knew to admire and love! How pretty he thought she was! And he had never even known how she looked before or how she was dressed.

It was their last meal together in their little home. And as it was the last, each felt instinctively how very happy they had been, those three, all alone without money, pomp, position—just struggling together each day for food, shelter, raiment,—holding hands as it were, as they struggled up the hill together. They were consciously sure, though without knowledge, that they had done the very best they could; had no regrets; were contentedly happy.

Each, also instinctively felt that they had reached the top, or were reaching the top and could enjoy the full sunshine of prosperity and contentment, holding each others hand now for the sheer joy of living.

CHAPTER X

Sitting alone in a suite of handsome rooms a tall, strong man (whose shoulders were slightly bent, hair perfectly white) was dreaming,—a habit that had grown to be second nature with him. His head was thrown far back against the soft cushioned back of his Morris chair, his feet upon the rack, the light turned and shaded so as to shine but dimly upon his face. From eyes that were closed a tear would flicker occasionally and roll down the lapel of his silk smoking jacket and on to splash upon the velvet rug at his feet. Each anniversary of his marriage, the birth of his baby boy, and the tragedy which robbed him of both, were marked by days of deep melancholy. How he had lived and kept his reason through all the intervening years he could not understand. The only link that held him stable upon the earth

was an exceedingly weak one, growing weaker and weaker with each anniversary. Tonight he was writing in his diary, as he did three times each year! "Still no tidings from you, my son, who this day have reached man's estate—I still hope—still have faith that you will some day come to me."

Being the twenty-first birthday of his son, the reflections were deeper and longer—the reminiscences more diverse than in years—the depression and melancholy more pronounced.

Always alone on these occasions he often-times addressed his objects of thought aloud.

"Yes, you are twenty-one today, my son, a man in your own right and I do so wonder where you are; what you are; who you are; what doing!

"You were too young to have taken any part in that terrible World War——" an expression of mingled doubt and pain passed over his face,—“yet being a Foster I don't know. I do not doubt but that you tried every way to be implicated for—” and here his expression changed to one of quiet pleasure softening the countenance grown almost majestic by continual, patient suffering, disappointment and continued hope. His smile was superficially happy as he delved far back into his past—his childhood—as he recalled stories of that other war.

"I don't know, I don't know—for I *do* know much of your grandfather's and your grandmother's Southern blood courses through your veins! Why, who could have been more patriotic, more virulent than the grandmothers!

"My father, your grandfather. That grand man! Ha, ha! he would never wear blue,—blue suits, blue hats, blue ties, blue socks, handkerchiefs with blue borders were completely ignored by him—they were taboo—not the right color by any manner of means. I remember how peculiar I felt the first time I heard him say, 'The Creator knew what He was about when He gave me dark

grey eyes, for He knew I could never have seen anything but red from blue ones.'

" 'I know the great majority of those who wore the blue of "the sixties" had not seen, had not understood. They had been misinformed, for, had they known anything at all they would have known that slavery was *not, could not* have been the cause of that very uncivil, uncalled for war in the face of the multiplied living facts.

" 'It is true that the great majority had that slavery doctrine preached to them continuously by those who were supposed to have been in a position to know, by those whose sacred duty it was to know,—to have been correctly informed as to the *casus belli*.

" 'The superiors knew—those who wanted the war,—that the sympathies of man are more quickly aroused to protect the down-trodden, the beaten, the driven, starved, neglected, maltreated, and will cause more drastic, determined action than for most any other cause.

" 'The great majority could not see, of course, that those they were "to free" were already being freed in the best, the right, the legitimate way. They did not know that many masters had given freedom to their every slave; that others were fast following their example; that eventually all would have been set free without the slightest breach in the brotherhood of man, without shedding one drop of blood. In some instances, discipline,—possibly harsh measures would have been resorted to as has ever been the rule in every great revolution, but it would have been neighbor with neighbor, friend with friend.

" 'The great majority did not know that the men, women and children of that "down-trodden, oppressed race" were stronger men, women and children physically, mentally, morally and spiritually than they have ever been in any period of their known history—the present not excepted.

" 'They did not know they were better housed, better fed, better clothed, better cared for physically than they

are today. Of course, there were exceptions—as there are always exceptions to every rule. There were some hard, unjust, mean, domineering, brutal masters and mistresses—some cruel and oppressive. There were some lazy, obstreperous, disloyal, disobedient, entirely untrustworthy slaves, good for nothing but to make trouble for both slave and owner. They are the ones who followed the carpet-bagger—the rapacious kind—the descendents of which fill our jails and penitentiaries today.

“‘In “the sixties” every negro man, and woman, yea, almost every child knew the value of time and labor and could do some worth-while work capable of making a splendid living. The men did mechanical work as good as the best; plows, buggies, wagons, harness, saddles, shoes were mended; horses and mules shod; ax and hoe-handles, single-trees and plow-shares made; fences, sheds and houses built. Yea, many of the out-houses and sheds built in those days are still standing defying time with much greater success than some of the present day. And haven’t we,—are we not still using an old coffee mill made of scrap iron, fastened to a solid oak stand, the hand-work of old Carey, our “carriage boy”? It is an ornament in the kitchen—a work of art, no better—not as good, can be had at any price today.

“‘No cook has ever surpassed the good old Southern negress. Her dishes are world famous.

“‘The women made feather beds and pillows, mattresses, quilts, counterpanes. Don’t we still sleep upon the pillows and beds, under the quilts and “spreads” made by those capable black hands under the supervision and direction of white heads?

“‘They could card, weave and sew.

“‘All knew how to kill, carve and cure meats; how to preserve fruits and vegetables and make wines.

“‘All could sing—My, how they could sing! Those old spiritual songs have never been surpassed, can never be duplicated for fineness of spirit, rhythm and the sweetness of melodious sounds. I can hear to this good day a crowd at the barn singing “Swing Low Sweet Chariot,

Happy Land” and many others as their swaying bodies and busy hands kept time to the music as they shelled corn, rainy days, for Saturday’s mill going to have meal and hominy ground;—some of the best corn being set aside for Aunt Cindy’s lye-hominy;—the “nubbins” put in a large box or barrels for the hogs. Or they were thrashing peas, picking peanuts or sorting potatoes. While in the “big house” Mammy was crooning By-lo-Baby-Bunting to sleepy eyes or in higher pitch singing “Aunt Dinah’s Quilting Party” as she watched the “boiling pot,” felt the sweet potatoes to see if they “was just right,” brewing the appetite-provoking coffee which sent its delightful aromas to every part of the house, even the yard—sweet odors which had been implanted in the berries in the coffee fields and under the blazing suns of their native Africa, which berries after being washed, dried, parched were “medium ground” in Uncle Carey’s mill and boiled in the water of the pure springs of their adopted Southland.

“The great majority did not know, could not see the *free* slaves, as they, like faithful watch-dogs around the house, wanting to sleep across the front doorsteps (which was not allowed) to protect “Old Marster’s” family from all harm and danger when the “men-folks” were away for the night,—while they were away fighting and killing those who were fighting and killing them in return in order to *free* them—the slaves, if you please.

“There has been love no truer, stronger, more faithful, more enduring, more patient, more tolerant, more abiding, more lasting, more glorious, more profitable than the love of Marsters and Missuses for Mammies, Uncle Ebens, Aunt Hannahs, Dinahs and Cheenas and vice versa—.”

“God so loved the world—God is love.”

Then to his original object of address he continued as if he had not digressed—

“I hope not, oh, I hope not! It would have put a scar, a blemish upon your young life which time could never have removed.

“The memories of such horrors as those boys experienced were too harrowing, too horrifying to be thrown off easily—too gruesomely gloomy for them to ever be free again from knowledge of anguish, misery, loneliness, home-sickness, suffering, agony—hell—!

“I doubt not that hundreds of the poor, brave fellows lost their reason, became raving maniacs from no other cause but from anguishing sympathetic suffering for their unfortunate stricken buddies whom they were powerless to succor.

“Never can they close their eyes tight enough—never can they become so blind as to keep from seeing upheavals of earth as volcanoes boiling over, as convulsions of mighty earthquakes, as they saw nature and man torn by shell, shrapnel, grape, canister, cannon. See the mountains of smoke and dust clear away leaving in their wake fallen heroes, mangled and torn masses of human flesh, the appealing eyes in their last glassy stare; the dying convulsion of the flesh as it quivered its last feeble effort to cling to the soul ready to wing its flight to realms unknown.

“Never can they stop their ears or become so deaf that they can not hear the bursting shells, the roar of cannon, the whirr of grape; the heavy craunch-craunch of the tank in its crushing, destroying march; the continuous roaring-buzz-buzz, whirr-whirr of flying machines; the never ending pop-pop, bang-bang of innumerable firearms. They will ever hear the groans, dying delirium; the prayers, the pleadings of their brothers in arms.

“Never can their souls become so dead as to forget how they wondered as they beheld: Is he ready to go? How will it be with his soul? Who will suffer because of his passing? Will little children be orphaned? Will the hearts of two women break—his wife’s and his mother’s—his mother’s and his affianced bride’s? Or is he all alone in the world—does no one care?

“No, never, never can they forget! My son, oh, my

son! I hope you have been, will ever be spared such awakenings!"

For eighteen years Daniel Benson Foster II, banker and realtor, of much financial strength and power, had lived in hopes of finding Daniel Benson Foster III.

Three times a year, for eighteen years, panoramic visions of five years of wedded bliss passed through his brain as he dreamed and smoked, smoked and dreamed. The last chapter so sweet, so wonderfully wonderful, to terminate in a nightmare of such hideous blackness—such horror—! Would it never end!

In sweet retrospection he saw his wife making the necessary preparation for an intimate, lengthy visit to her parents who lived in a distant state. How delicately beautiful, how sweet she looked in her helplessness. What admiration and love he felt for her as he helped her up the steps of the waiting train and turned to lift his boy beside her, following quickly with their hand luggage. How strangely attractive their three-year-old boy. His brown eyes flashing at every new object and scene or squinting with laughter, as his lips would curl in an adorable smile lighting up his baby face, when a passenger here and there would speak to him or pat him on the head in passing. How paternally proud he was of his little family. Yet, the feeling of awe and fearful apprehension every true man experiences for the wife unwell, filled his heart.

The tears would fall as he recalled how sweetly responsive she was to his every effort to make the trip as comfortable and pleasant as possible. How inquisitive and restless the boy had been on this his first real ride on the train. Then he remembered how he and the boy had gone for water and a "peep out the door" when, lo! a crash! Then darkness! chaos!

That was the first of December. Two weeks after, he opened his eyes in a hospital, in a strange place, among strangers. Making inquiry he learned the day and date. He asked for his wife and boy. No one had seen or heard of them. "What? God!" He could not move, he was in

a plaster cast, both legs had been badly mangled. He asked that a message be hurried to his father.

The father came. The information given was horrifying, maddening. "The wife and tiny baby girl had been instantly killed." "Wife—tiny baby girl instantly killed, my God!"

Then oblivion for another fortnight, taking the combined efforts of doctors, nurses and attendants to keep the spark of life from going out in the raving man. The mother was sent for. She stayed with her son three months, until he was pronounced well enough to be carried home. When he was strong enough the story was finished—

"Your mother and I were wired and rushed to Lucy, having first notified her parents requesting them to meet us there. Her address was found in a purse which she held in her hand. We put her poor crushed body, with the baby in the same casket and carried it to an undertaker's parlor. Then her father and I came back to continue the search for you and Baby Dan. It was dark, fearfully dark, and so rough and such deep cuts on each side of the track, and so near the river we could not get near enough for our cars to afford any light, only flash lights, lanterns and torches were available. All night long we searched and looked, eight other bodies had been recovered, crushed and mangled almost beyond identification. The wounded had been sent to a hospital, but no signs of you or Baby Dan.

"We were frantic. The wreckage had caught fire, it burned furiously and as all others were accounted for, we were forced to conclude that you and Dan, Jr., were victims of the horrible flames. But later your hat was found floating in the river with one of Baby Dan's tiny gloves loosely lying on the brim, mute signs of drowning, we thought, instead of the flames. Divers were brought, but no trace could be found of you or your boy. Lucy's body was then taken to her home and buried. We still have your hat and baby's glove, just as they were found."

"How did I manage to get away in this shape?"

"I do not know, no one knows, it will ever remain a mystery, I reckon. The hospital authorities said you had been brought there on a country wagon. They had carried you more than twenty miles and in an exact opposite direction from the hospital to which the others of the wreck had been taken. The men who brought you said they found you lying in the middle of the road, they thought dead. You and Baby Dan must have been thrown clear of the wreck. You must have dragged your body to the cross road, some distance from the accident,—particles of dirt, trash, leaves and sticks clinging to your elbows, which were torn, and to the front of your clothing told that much. You were so nearly in the road the men concluded an automobile had knocked you down and so the report was sent in.

"Months after we learned that several days after the accident a baby boy about two and a half or three years old was found wandering in the streets of a little town some fifty miles from the accident. He was taken in a home and kept several days thinking some one would call for him.

"The parties finding him thought the child had wandered away from some tourists who had camped near the town, that he would soon be missed and called for; but, no one came, nor did they hear any inquiries. They finally took him to a hospital and the family asked to be let keep him, giving him up if anyone should call for him later.

"Being a quiet, little, out of the way place and the people able to care for him, the request was granted. After it was published several days in the county paper, nothing more was thought of it.

"Some months after, a friend of mine was in the little town, heard of the little boy and knowing of the uncertainty under which we lived, wired me. Without mentioning it to a soul I went at once but found the people had left for parts unknown two or three months before and no trace of them could I find . . . "

From the moment of the conclusion of that story

Daniel Benson Foster II, had an abiding faith and hope that his boy was living and that by some strange twist of human events he would some day come home to him. Great events are often-times produced by mere, by slight accidents and for eighteen years this hope had been kept burning in his soul, would not be quenched. His greatest fear was that some one had adopted him that his boy's name had been changed, for the years of advertising had brought no response, every clue went to nought.

After the senior Foster's death, Daniel II learned that his father had been on several long trips, when he received even a slight indication of a possible find, keeping him in ignorance until he could verify it, for he had ferreted out so many and found them all false. He knew the suspense, the anxiety and the possible, probable disappointment would soon end the young father's life, or would drive him insane.

Finally all ads were discontinued, hope grew fainter and fainter.

Other means had been and were being employed, but without the least avail. The reminiscences were ever bitter-sweet and Daniel Benson Foster II most fully indulged himself at each anniversary.

CHAPTER XI

Years have passed. Years of honorable toil and honest endeavor by both Daniel Foster and Robert Bishop.

Years of pleasure and profit and pain.

The last months of the World War Robert was eligible to offer himself to his country. Daniel being under age, had forced himself to stop even wanting to go.

Robert and Daniel had discussed and debated the subject "war" much,—both pro and con—for and against. They were opposed to war—conscientiously so—but the conditions under which their country had entered this war palliated all objections. It appealed to them as being a gigantic expression of charity; an overwhelmingly

commendable spirit of brotherly-love; a wonderful exposition of wanting to bear another's burdens and help the infirmities of the weak; and an enviable disposition of a fearless, dauntless valor to strive to surmount a glowing, burning mountain of righteous indignation.

They held Uncle Sam the benevolent old gentleman whose bowels of compassionate mercy constrained him to do his best to protect the unprotected; to help lift up brave, courageous peoples who were being unjustly, undeservedly ruthlessly punished and oppressed by a greatly outnumbering, overpowering, powerful foe;—as well as to protect his own children from further damnable slaughter.

As a result Robert volunteered.

Rising above his natural instinct of love for peace and prosperity, — and notwithstanding the tears, prayers, pleadings, entreaties of his mother, his Uncle Robert, relatives and legion of friends, he “shouldered his gun and marched away.”

Mrs. Bishop was frantic—she even cursed the day she left her humble home and had come to live with her brother. She could endure poverty, hunger and want better than this—for what use would it be to her or hers now? The business will fail, fail absolutely without him —(and their part of it did experience an awful slump, and but for the demand of the government for their products their whole business enterprise would have gone under).

Robert was away from home nearly eighteen months, but saw active service only once—one of the fiercest, most horrible struggles of the entire war. He came out unscathed. Came home with no scars, no bodily hurts—but in memoriam's legion!

It took only a few months for him to get in working harness again and soon had the business booming,—but he was restless—something was lacking. He could not analyze his vacant, unsatisfied feelings. He finally concluded it was woman he needed, he would get married, he must have a home of his own.

The Bishop enterprises had more than quadrupled in the ten years, despite the troublesome, anxious war years. Robert and his uncle had grown to be a power in the financial and business world. Robert's commodities were second to none,—his reputation none questioned,—his word was his bond. He had had the foresight to keep his acres always fresh and green; wonderfully attractive, productive and profitable. He had allowed as much of the natural beauty as was possible to remain untouched. As a consequence the large metropolis with its restless populace, being attracted and drawn thitherward by the glory of God's nature, was reaching out its hands for handsome home sights for the palaces of its rich. Robert had been offered fabulous prices for the several hundred acres he held as a hunting and fishing preserve, but declined to sell, saying he could get far more absolute joy and profit by keeping it for the happiness of complete relaxation for his immediate family and friends than he could otherwise obtain,—more than the hundreds of thousands of dollars could possibly bring him. He had been told by experienced, extensive, inveterate travelers (and having gone and observed much himself) that no prettier, more picturesque, more absolutely ideal place could be found (all things considered) than the one he held. It was ideal—ideally located. Financiers, lords of the money kingdom, had used every persuasion, every art of their artful trade they were cognizant of, to get their fingers on his holdings; but the iron posts,—with the chevaurdefrise, minus the long spikes,—which completely encircled the property, fully protected, but did not obstruct the view,—remained intact.

Twice a year for the past five years the friends met for a week's outing:—once in the spring when life, energy, vim and vigor were still felt in appreciable, active quantities; while the world was still widest awake, before it had passed into the languor of the drowsy inertia of the hot, sultry days of summer they came; and, once when the hunting season opened, after the

cool October nights, cold November days had made bright, gorgeous, vari-colored coverlids of leaves for dying flowers and shrubs; when the falling leaves, the crackling sound of broken branches and twigs, the wind whistling softly through the branches of the naked trees made the call for the hunter, with his barking, yelping, prancing pack too loud, too long, too persuasive to be neglected or passed by unheeled—the Farrises and Daniel with a few friends came again and spent days, sometimes weeks, at a time with the Bishops and their friends in perfect, luxurious freedom at their camp, — thereby “adding a hundred years to our lives” the Judge said.

Robert’s home was Daniel’s over many happy weekends. Nothing rested his tired brain—after days spent in wading through law records and other deep reading, much writing and thinking, more than the time spent in the blessed freedom of the country, rife with every convenience of the modern city home—shorn of all formality and convention—of all “frills and furbelows.”

When their twenty-first birthdays arrived respectively, Daniel and Robert were about the same height, but Daniel could still be dubbed Lean—though he was admirably, compactly built. As he expressed it, “It is no use for me to eat cream, oatmeal, chocolate or anything else recommended for the lean-guaranteed to increase avoirdupois. I will always belong to Pharaoh’s lean kine, but as long as I am perfectly well, I shall not complain.”

The same could not be said of his brain,—it had developed to unusual proportions; the Judge would whisper to his nearest neighbor on occasions when Daniel would thus express himself as belonging to Pharaoh’s lean kine—“Yes, but his brain belongs to, classes with Solomon’s wise kind.”

How very proud the Judge was of his foster son! Daniel had never disappointed him nor Mrs. Farris. And how she loved “Dan!”

Daniel Foster and Robert Bishop shared their every experience, every thought in their frequent get-togethers. Only one subject they had not shared, except in a general way—their heart affairs. Both spoke of “their girls” with respectful reverence, and would occasionally mention them when telling of some incident, but never had “their girls” been *discussed* . . . Each knew if the other loved, he felt as he did, and all talk would be irrelevant.

However, Daniel was a little surprised one evening when summoned to the 'phone, being wanted by Robert. “Could you come over for this week-end? I have something to show you, also questions to ask which won't stand the 'phone.”

“Can't come this time, unless it's exceedingly important or necessary that I come, Bob.”

“Well, it's *exceedingly* important to me, hence; necessary that you come.”

“Can we attend to it all in one evening and may I bring Jo Byrne?”

“No, to both questions. Come alone and for twenty-four hours.”

“All right. I am ‘dated up’ but think I can arrange one twenty-four hours. Which one will suit best, the Friday or Saturday?”

“Friday will suit better for this conference.”

“Very well, I'll be there in time for dinner, not later than six - thirty. I order that delicious gumbo, fried chicken, hot biscuit or rolls and coffee, it's not quite so good anywhere on earth as there, Bob.”

“Thanks. Order received in toto. I'll tell mother what you said. Come on.”

“Dan, Ruth graduates from Columbia the last of May. I am going up to the exercises. She has everything in readiness and we are coming straight back to her home and the next day at high-noon, we are to be married. It is to be a very quiet home affair. No one knows the date of our marriage except those who are to be present

at the ceremony; her mother, father and others of her family and her roommate—a Miss Brandies—, mother and Uncle Rob—but I can't go through this thing without you, Lean. I want to know if you could run up to Newton, be there when we get to her home (the train gets in at 6:05) be at the train with my big car. We shall go straight to her home, get the coal-dirt and dust off, change up a little and go to the club for dinner; thence to the theatre; then back home to learn just what we are expected to be and do, for, and at the wedding. That's the situation;—can and will you?"

"Congratulations and best wishes for the happiest life a man can experience with the woman he loves, dear Lank. Certainly I will be there, here, anywhere you say and do anything you wish me to."

"Thanks, old man. Now the other phase of the thing is this. When we come back from a two weeks' stay at our camp—just she and I,—a good cook and man to wait on us—you know Ruth will be tired, worried almost to exhaustion. I want her to have a good rest, complete relaxation of mind and body. No one knows where we will be except Uncle Rob—he is to see to that part of our pleasure and Ruth is delighted,—she thinks the camp the most beautiful, the most delightfully refreshing place on earth. She refused to go to the usual places brides generally select,—said it would make her sick, and I believe it would, being already tired,—and you *know* how I desire just such.

"I am 'still off' the other business. We are going straight to housekeeping. I submitted several plans to her before she went back to Columbia Christmas and our home is all ready for occupancy. I want you to see it, go through it, examine everything thoroughly, see that it comes jamb up to plans and specifications of the contract before I make the last payment. I've watched it very closely, still some important detail, some convenience may have been overlooked and you can detect it. Mother and Uncle Robert think it perfect and Ruth is wild to see it,—she's the dearest girl, Dan, and I am so happy,"

lamely from big Bob . . . "Come, it's only a short distance, we can walk."

They walked up the blocked cement walk, the grounds were beautifully laid off, flowers already blooming in the yard and in vessels made of corresponding material as the walks. Care had been taken not to disturb a single tree. The several large oaks and one tall, symmetrical cedar gave wonderful setting to the new home which was flooded with light as Robert walked up the steps and pressed a button.

"Pshaw! I didn't intend to light but one room at a time, but it's all right, come in, Dan."

Carefully, slowly and with actual affection for each room and fixtures, Robert carried Daniel, explaining the effect he and Ruth desired by having this here, putting that there. Did he think these results were obtained, judged by him, an outsider, a visitor, by whom they would want to get the same idea, have every pleasure and comfort, see the beauties as they did?

The survey was made. Every water device, every light switch, every electric device was tried out. Every chair sat upon to find its comforts or shortcomings; every window looked out and lights thrown on to see if the view could be made more attractive, more beautiful. "Ruth suggested this and this," Robert would explain as view after view was followed up. Everything, so far as Daniel could see, was comfort, cheer, complete exactness, nothing to be desired, nothing lacking. He knew Robert. Every drapery, every rug, ornament, picture, everything spoke volumes of respect, honor, love, adoration for the woman he hoped to make the mistress of this home.

Daniel noticed, with full measure of humor and appreciation (of which he did not speak), the marked difference in sizes of the chairs in the living room, library, and especially their bed room. High, roomy, comfortable chairs for those of Robert's large, lengthy comfort; others of like make and style (several sizes smaller) for those of Ruth's small, lithe comfort. "This is as it should be, thought he, I'll remember that; for a long, tall

person can be just as comfortable, sit just as gracefully in a small low chair; as short, small persons can sit comfortably and gracefully in a chair where their feet can't touch the floor, their heads reach the natural head rest, or their arms touch without effort the arms of the chair. Yes. I'll remember that." Aloud he said:

"Lank, no woman on earth, that is even half a woman, could help but love, honor and obey the man who has put so much thought and love into a home for her. I know Ruth does appreciate you and will reverence you to the end of time. Your home is perfect in its complete homey loveliness. The whole scheme of your marriage, two weeks' honeymoon at the camp, then to your beautiful home—dear Lank, is ideal. It strikes me as perfect. May the luster of your wedded bliss never dim. Any visitor, any guest could not fail to note the completeness, the beauty of everything, if I am a fair judge."

"Thank you, Lean, you and Jo Byrne shall be our first guests—we want you to be—won't you?"

Daniel was a little confused, but quickly rallied his forces—"Will you serve us my favorites for dinner?" he fenced.

"Certainly will, just name the day."

"Lank, I have enjoyed this time with you more than any ever, though, I must confess I was somewhat surprised at the knowledge disclosed. If you think of anything I can do to serve you and Ruth, I shall take it as a favor if you will let me know."

"Thanks, Lean, I certainly shall."

"I know you are happy, Lank, good bye. Luck to you!"

"Thanks, same to you. Good bye.—I believe Lean is in love with Jo Byrne or some other girl,—I believe he, too, is fixing to get married," soliloquized Robert as he went to his room—"Every word, every expression, every move, loudly, unmistakably said: 'I'm in love too.'"

But that winter found Daniel putting in every moment in hard thought and study at the university where he

expected to receive his diploma at the close of that semester.

The year following found Daniel—not the dissembler of the law of which he had so ardently dreamed and for which he had been studying and preparing himself; hence, he was not gradually ascending to the seat of the supreme judge as Judge Farris said the name David indicated he would and as his desires were of that nature. But it found him dealing in monies of large denominations. Finances were his forte. It came as naturally as for a fish to swim, a dog to bark, a bird to fly and in his meteoric rise in the financial world he resembled the eagle in his bold daring, his successful flights. Being a clear, precise, quick thinker and having the courage of his convictions he soared away upon the mountain top nor heard the song of the little birds below nor cared what they sang.

Daniel never got over his ten-cent bonus and baking powder can banking days.

CHAPTER XII

The clock had chimed eleven, the embers of a dying fire—the first of the fall—(not yet cold enough for furnace heat) were falling apart sending up their last feeble, flickering rays. Going out, then catching hold again giving weak yet weaker flashes; then falling to rise, to flicker no more; but to glow fiery red, then blacken—die clinkers or ashes. The Judge was still reading. Mrs. Farris had gone to her room an hour before. The Judge became conscious of diminishing heat, felt his feet growing uncomfortably cold. He closed his book, placed it upon the rack, glanced at the clock which showed a few minutes of twelve; stood up, slung his arms back and forth vigorously, was doing the same exercise with his legs when the front door was noiselessly opened and closed as Daniel came in, humming softly to himself.

“Glad to find you up—must have found something ex-

ceedingly interesting to have kept you reading so late," spoke Daniel in low voice as he came up to the still glowing coals, and stood with back to them, his hands spread so as to receive their warmth.

"Late for Judge Farris, how about Daniel Foster?" smiled the Judge.

"I guess I am a privileged character at this time of life," laughed Daniel. "Judge, I want you to prolong your dissipation a few minutes longer for me if you will. This room is a little frigid, believe I will put on a little more coal."

The Judge made himself comfortable as the fire began to blaze, while Daniel, with his light top coat still on, stood with his back to the fire, one hand thrust in his pocket, the other dangling his watch chain.

"Judge, I owe it to you and Mrs. Farris to tell you this: You remember long years ago when I was a tiny boy I told you I had elected to become a judge like you, have a wife like Mrs. Farris, and a home like this. Well, I meant it. That ambition, that desire has never changed; nor have my energies and efforts in that direction diminished; still as you know, I have fallen far short of my first aspiration. I can never reach your pinnacle of success as a judge, that is very evident. But, with all reverence and respect I ask that you rejoice with me again and again, for I have not failed in my second resolve. Judge, Jo Byrne has promised to be my wife.

"The days of miracles are not over, for it is only miraculous that the little girl I thought the prettiest I had ever seen, when I was but eight years old, (she was so far out of my reach), the little girl with beautiful curls the color of old furniture shavings; the little girl whom I thought was yours when I saw her with that most magnificent dog, is to be mine, she is mine. Please exult in and sympathize so much with my feelings, so much in my happiness that you and Mrs. Farris will not mention it. I wanted you to know as soon as possible so you would understand and be glad with me."

"Congratulations, Daniel, I could not wish it other-

wise. I have seen the course you two were pursuing for some time. Wife and I have watched, prayed and hoped that would be the culmination of your admiration and friendship, that such happiness would be yours. You could not have made a wiser, better choice, in my opinion and I do indeed wish you all joy.

"Daniel, I can say what I am about to say to you without fear of bad results. Daniel, your proclivity toward making money is very marked. It seems as natural for dollars to grow where you turn your hand and brains as for leaves to grow upon the strong, sturdy oak. A wonderful characteristic but one fraught with many dangerous pitfalls, especially for one so young.

"You are not hard to look upon, another serious constituent of your nature. Either of these has been a ball and chain around many a brave and good man's neck. These are the two most powerful forces in the masculine make-up, and when combined have the strength to tear down and destroy the most Gibraltic specimen—they have the strength to build up and feed from everlasting to everlasting those who with their wisdom and wealth have gotten knowledge.

"I honestly believe, my son, you belong to the last mentioned. I believe you are big enough, brave enough, have lived with the unfortunate poor long enough; I believe you are far sighted enough, have the moral and intellectual ability to use these all powerful forces as the Almighty intended they should be used.

"I believe you fully realize what a power money is—you have seen the results in the few short years you have handled it and observed its handling. History, my son, has its multiplied records of the wrecks the misuse of money has wrought. It has destroyed man and nation since the beginning of time—and, son, none are immune to its atrocities; possibly because of the quickness with which it so often attacks and the beautiful irresistible pictures it holds up ever before our unsuspecting, benighted visions.

Yet—turn the picture—reverse the use of its power

and what glorious uplifts in physical, mental, moral, spiritual comforts it brings to millions.

“Extremes and means — the jewel consistency has never appealed to me so much as in the last few years or since I’ve been watching your development into manhood. You remind me, Daniel, of a strong, young sapling in physical being. I hope you will be as the sapling in that the winds of flattery, the storms of popularity, the cyclones of greed and graft can not uproot you, but will cause the roots of rectitude and right to descend farther down into the vitals of your life, catching such hold as to never be shaken and make the full-grown tree able to withstand the strain which the years will bring—make you ready, anxious to help in a right way the hordes of deserving young men and women less favored than yourself.

“Ever remember, son, more and more money brings on more and graver responsibilities. I have seen hoary-haired giants become but as dry stubble in the financial forests when the storms of temptations began to howl—the full ripe years, the heavy fruited top became, in truth, the weight that uprooted, tore down and utterly destroyed them.

“Most wonderful are your opportunities — weighty, terrible your responsibilities. May you never under any circumstances let the ‘jingling of the guinea’ deaden or weaken in the smallest degree your high sense of honor.

“My prayer to God for you is that you may never be less than a man. I am proud of your physique, proud of your personal appearance; proud of your brain, of your social and financial standing; proud of the respect you have for yourself. So far as emulating me as judge (I appreciate very much the compliment) I had rather see you where you are—in the sphere to which you are naturally adapted. You have enough law to make your decisions wise and just, enough to place you free from worry of having attorneys; enough to make you competent to make quick, correct decisions. I am truly glad you have had the law whether you practice it or not, it

will ever make you a good, capable, reliable judge after all.

"Daniel, there has been much joy and satisfaction in my placing store upon you. You don't know, you can't know, the unspeakable joy wife and I experience when we can point our finger with love and pride at you and with deep concern say: 'That is our boy, he is part of the work of our hands.'"

Daniel turned to face the fire. "Thank you, thank you, sir, for what you have said," in muffled voice, was all he could say.

Judge Farris passed on to his room leaving Daniel to the quiet of his own thoughts.

CHAPTER XIII

"Come in. What brought you so early, my pretty maid?" laughed the Judge as Josie Byrne Allison came tripping up the walk.

"Thank you. I came to see Dan, Judge, is he here?"

And that young man having seen her from his window, as she crossed the street and hearing his name called, came down the stairs three steps at a leap.

"Yes, ma'am, right here and at your service," he said at the finish of a several foot glide. He caught her hands as if a kind of brace were necessary. "Can't do that so well since cold weather set in," he guiltily blushed.

This was the first time she had been over since she had promised to be his wife.

As a soft, pink glow suffused her face, it became appealingly charming and beautiful.

"So glad you found it necessary to call," said the Judge, "Come in Joie." As Daniel placed a chair near the fire, the Judge had pressing business elsewhere and marched straight back leaving the two alone.

"How beautiful, fresh and sweet you look, dear Jo! I have never seen you dressed like this before," and taking her in his arms, he smothered her with kisses. When

she recovered herself she pushed him from her blushing deeply, saying as she hurriedly glanced about:

"Why, Dan! You ought not have—done—that—what made you do—such—a thing—Da . . . ?"

"*You*, my darling, *you* made me. Never do and look that way again if you do not want me to murder you with kisses—you temptress. How could I help it when you look so transcendently beautiful in that morning gown?—Jo, I have had to hold myself in check so long and now it's my privilege,—I have the right, dear . . . "

"No, you haven't either—why we are—why we are—it's—oh, Dan," and she burst into tears.

"Forgive me dear, dear, Jo, if I did you wrong. I will try hard never to hurt you again. But I am not stone and you are tempting me now beyond all human endurance. Dry those tears and look at me or I will be forced to take you in my arms again. —Jo—?"

Another slight pause. "Jo?"

"Dan, you won't . . . "

"I will have to and this minute, if you shed another tear, if you do not look at me—, Jo? . . . " and taking her hands in one of his he dried her tears with his handkerchief, then placing a finger under her chin drew her sweet face close to his, but did not touch her lips. . . .
"What is it, dear, what message is it you have for me?"

She turned and dropped upon the couch, tucking one foot under her. Looking archly into his deep eyes as he stood looking down at her said:

"Ruth called up and said she wanted you and me to come over for dinner this evening. It is Lydia Lu's second birthday, and she wants to have a little celebration, have two tables of bridge, for the mothers who come with their babies and she wanted you and me to match her and Bob. She had to call early as she was going to her mother's—they are to go on a shopping expedition and wanted to get us before we made other plans. I am to let her know at nine. If we go, or don't go *we* will have to do a little shopping ourselves, for we must give that darling baby girl a gift. So I came over early

to ask if I could go to town with you as you go to your office, so we can do this shopping."

Daniel wished in his heart Jo Byrne was at home—he with her. Why had she said just that? Did she know she was tantalizing, tormenting him? Looking at her—knowing her as he did, he knew she did not. It was very necessary just then that he fix the fire, then put his hands deep down in his pockets before answering very matter-of-factly.

"Yes, Jo, you may go down town with me as I go to work."

"We ought to have some idea as to what we will get before we go, Dan. What do you suggest?"

Daniel could endure no more, relief must come somehow,—he was stifling, he lamely suggested,—

"Have you a jewelry or doll catalog at your house? We could look it over and get some idea."

"I don't know. We could go see . . . Mother will know." As she stood up he placed her light morning wrap around her shoulders, opened the door for her to pass out, lightly touched her arm as she went down the steps—one ahead of him, bringing their faces almost on a line as she looked up at him and talked. "These crisp mornings and evenings put such gorgeous colors into flowers and leaves—look at those chrysanthemums—did you ever see so many colors?—so many shades and blends of the same color. They, with those vines and those fiery red bushes as a back-ground, look exactly like pictures I have seen of old fashioned Italian gardens from my window and our front porch. The first thing I do every morning is to open my window and look out upon this lovely natural picture. Don't you just love them?" she gritted her teeth as she knelt, placed her arms around as many as she could reach and looked up at him.

"The most beautiful picture I have ever seen—I *love* it," the low earnestness told how very true the statement. As she gave her hand for a "lift up," he said, "don't you want to cut some for your room?"

"Not this morning, thank you, I have roses already cut."

If he had to encounter this every day he knew he could not wait for the New Year for the "*right*," the "privilege" to hold her to his heart. He must get himself together and hold fast 'til the next hour was over. So, with clinched fists and jaws he followed her slowly across the street, up the steps, into the living room where she left him to look for the catalogue. She soon returned with a catalog of jewelry. Jauntily throwing herself upon a lounge, she motioned him to sit beside her while she opened the book. He saw nothing but her pretty hands, the one that wore his ring flashing his love signals as she turned the pages, and pointed to this and that. Finally, a little locket, with ring to match, were decided upon. The selection being "well pleasing" to Daniel (though he could not have told to save him what the selection was). Then she asked: "How shall we present them,—take them or have them mailed direct?"

He didn't know.

"It will be more satisfactory if we take them," she decided, "you giving the ring as that is usually a gentleman's gift," she said roguishly, "and I will give the locket which is more feminine," she smiled irresistibly into his face. "Now you go and I'll be ready to start in twenty minutes. I don't wish anything for breakfast but a cereal and fruit."

"Haven't you breakfasted yet? How rude of me! We had just finished and I had gone up to my room for some letters when you came."

"Not rude at all—how were you to know?"

"Ask."

"Then I would have been the rude one to have intruded at that hour."

As he reached the sidewalk she called out: "Dan, you haven't told me what to tell Ruth? whether we would be there or not."

"Why, my darling," whispered low as he reached the bottom step where she was standing—"didn't you say

we would *take* the gifts—it being the most satisfactory way.”

Charmingly she blushed as she laughingly said: “So much for a feminine, twentieth century memory. Daniel, will you pardon me for calling you back, and for not asking you if you could or wanted to go?”

“I’ll go where you want me to go, dear love, I’ll do what you want me to do,” he softly sang.

“Daniel, how dare you! Go home.” He turned to obey. “Don’t forget to stop by for me as you go to town.”

“I’ll try not.” “How charmingly inconsistent your sweet forgetfulness — your sweet thoughtfulness,” he chuckled as he briskly stepped across the street and up the steps.

How full! How transcendently happy the days and weeks! How swiftly they passed for Jo and Dan. The wedding to plan—things to do now, things to be left undone then; the wedding itinerary to outline; and last but by no means least, a home to build and furnish. Though, after much discussion and reflection they decided it best to wait until after the wedding and adjunctive activities were over to build their home. In this her parents, Judge and Mrs. Farris thought them wise—especially as there was not the slightest reason for rushing things.

CHAPTER XIV

TWO MONTHS LATER

The clock had long since chimed the hour of midnight. The Judge folded his paper, tossed it upon the table, threw the remains of the cigar he was smoking into the fire and slowly ascended the stairs went to his room. He had just dozed to sleep when a gentle tap on his door roused him. “Who’s there?” he called.

“Daniel, Judge.”

“Come in.”

"Pardon me for this intrusion, but I *must* see you for a few minutes,—I do not want to disturb Mrs. Farris. Can you come to my room?"

"Certainly, Daniel, hand me the heavy robe there in my chifferobe," and slipping on his robe and slippers, he followed Daniel to his room.

Judge Farris knew from the flash of his eyes, the low drawn, quick quivering voice, that Daniel was sorely perplexed—angry. Seldom had he seen Daniel angry—never as now. He was deathly, ashy pale, his jaws set, his eyes electric fires.

"Judge, have this chair and have the goodness to listen, if I can tell you with enough reason so that you may understand. I am insanely hurt,—hellish, devilish mad.

"Tonight while at the dance at the club, Jo and I were on a seat in a secluded part of the porch. Several ladies were on the inside, at a window near us. I had brought some refreshments out so we could drink and eat at will, undisturbed. I caught her name coupled with mine, naturally I listened, thinking possibly some one was looking for us; but no, it was the group of women talking. In loud whispers this is what we heard: 'How Mr. and Mrs. Joe Byrne Allison can allow their daughter to go with that Daniel Foster is more than I can see'—I did not catch the next remark, then, 'Why she is wearing a diamond as large as a dime, a regular mogul headlight—Daniel Foster's—think of it!'"

"'Why do you speak so, Mrs. McDonald. Do you know anything against the young man? He seems quite nice?'"

"'Seems quite nice, yes, of course. Why shouldn't he? Know, why I thought every one knew that he is a nameless tramp—doesn't even know whether his name is Foster, Smith or Jones. He is an interloper. How Judge and Mrs. Farris allow themselves to be duped by him is more than I can even imagine. The Judge passes for a brainy man, but evidently he is in his dotage, mole blind.'"

"Counter remarks, I did not catch them then, 'Well, possibly for them, those two, but usually there are children. I should think it would be very embarrassing for the

grandparents, Jo too, for people to tell her children they had a nameless waif, a tramp for a daddy; taunt them by asking them if they were kin to the Brown's, White's and Black's—I do not believe Jo knows his history or she would not encourage him, go out with him, certainly not marry him.'

"I could endure no more. I took the tray from Jo's lap put it on the floor, put my hand on hers and said: 'Jo, let me take you home, please.' Her hand was icy—she sat very erect—she seemed unable to move. I put my arm around her, helped her to my car, got the butler to have a maid bring her wraps, bring them with my hat, coat, and gloves to my car, saying, 'Miss Allison was not feeling well and wished to go home.'

"Not one word did Jo say. I put my hand on her's. She shivered, God! think of it, shivered at my touch! I left her at her door. I kissed her hand (which she let me hold only a moment) and left her. I had a thousand times rather have faced a firing squad than to have left her to face a living hell—. God Almighty knows she is mine! I . . . "

His hands clasped so tightly the nails, the joints, were bloodless, his vessels strutted; his teeth ground, it seemed as if they must break.

Judge Farris was stunned, hurt, angry.

"Sit down, Dan. We must thrash this thing out. You must listen to me. Do as I say. You are in no condition, you are totally unfit; to think sanely; to act wisely."

"I had rather stand, I can breathe better."

"In the first place, Dan, *you* know that you are not a nameless tramp . . . "

"What else am I?"

"In the second place *you know* you are not an interloper. Wife and I had to do some clever maneuvering to get you in our home—you are *not* an intruder in the smallest atomical degree. In the third place (not saying it boastfully) the boy that Mrs. Farris and I would take into our home, love and rear as our own, is worthy the love, the hand of any girl and I would so love to so

inform the Mrs.—whoever they are. If the truth were known I wager they—and the other scandal mongers, have daughters of marriageable age that they would delight to see become Mrs. Daniel B. Foster. And, I shall prosecute certain scandal mongers—character assassins—make them ‘pay the fiddler’ by proving their assertions,—make them reap the full benefits of their unkind, untrue statements. We will see who is in their dotage—where the imbecility comes in.”

“No, Judge, you and Mrs. Farris must not be drawn into this, you must not be hurt, must not become offended because of me. I appreciate—oh, how I do appreciate your confidence, your belief in me! Your love . . .

“It is hard, damnably hard, for a man to lay his heart bare to another, and I know you believe that I would not, could I have honorably done otherwise. I would have left without a word of explanation, but I could not bear to be thought an ingrate by you, by my dear mother Farris . . .

“But, Judge, it *is* true I do not know my mother and father. I *do* know they were all right. I know they were honorable, honest, good, though they may have been as poor as the poorest. It is true I was a waif, but I assure you an honorable, honest one, I *do* know I am all right. No man is worthy to call Jo Byrne Allison wife, but I am as worthy as any living man, and if she and I were the only ones to be considered I would take her in my arms and defy the ‘world, the flesh and the devil.’ But . . . as the old woman said—there may be others,—then I would be a murderer—I would kill any man or woman who should taunt one of mine with doubtful ancestry. They could never march under the shadowy protection of the scarlet letter. No . . .” His passions over came him, a choking hissing sound forced its way through his teeth.

In changed voice he continued: “As happy as I have been in this home, as much as I love and owe you and

Mrs. Farris I wish I had never come here, never had seen the woman—!

"I should have left without a word, but as I said, I can bear anything better than that you should think me ungrateful, for no other reason under heaven would I have told you all this. That is all, Judge, but before I go promise that you and Mrs. Farris will not think of me as an ingrate, will think as kindly of me as possible."

"Dan, I am sorry you should even think we could think of you as an ingrate, you have been all a son could possibly be. I wish I could shout it to the world just how good, how very satisfactory your every act has been. I know you are heavy hit, Dan, know your very life and soul seem crushed within you; but, you are a brave, strong, courageous man, you must carry on. What do you mean by saying, 'before I go'—'I would have gone without a single word?' "

"Do you imagine I could, even for an hour, endure here longer? Why, Judge, I would go raving mad!"

"Did you tell Jo you are going?"

"No."

"What will she think, Daniel? What will Jo do? You know she loves you, I know she loves you. Is it hard on you? Then think what it will mean to her. You know 'Love is of man's life a thing apart—'tis woman's whole existence.' You . . . "

"Judge, for God's sake, do not make it any harder for me! I can not see her again. I could not leave her. I would go stark mad!"

"After what she has heard, she will think I duped her; will think of me as the ladies wish her to, and hate me with bitter, deadly hate. She will think I deceived her, lied to her—she will not entertain even a kindly thought for me and for her sake, her happiness I hope she will—that will help her so much to forget. Good night and good bye, Judge, God bless you and your good, sweet wife."

His tall form quivered, shook convulsively as he stood very erect and held the door for the Judge to pass out.

The Judge rushed to his wife's room, roused her, told her of the hideous rabble of the crowd—what havoc it was playing. "Come with me quickly, maybe he will listen to you; maybe you can persuade him not to leave. With trembling fingers she folded her kimono around her, slipped on her slippers and hurried to Daniel's room, but,

*All within was desolate and bare,
The room had lost its soul—
He was not there.*

Papers concerning the disposition of some important matters, which the Judge could attend to, were neatly stacked, with wide rubber bands holding them intact. Across the front was written in bold type. "Please attend to these at your very earliest convenience." And two letters, one addressed to Judge and Mrs. Farris, the other to Jo Byrne Allison, with "please deliver," were on the table.

The Judge turned the letter over and over gravely thinking the while. He knew Daniel Foster was *gone*. The letter was as one from the dead. Sitting by his wife on the side of Daniel's bed they together read:

Dear Judge and Mrs. Farris:

I love, I respect, I honor you. I am not an ingrate. I can not bear to ruin Jo's life. Daniel Foster no longer exists; he is dead; he goes into the whirling throng to lose his name, his identity. His earnest desire is that you try not to find him, dismiss him from your minds; when you must think of him, be as generous, as charitable as you can. He shall ever hold you in revered remembrance.

Daniel B. Foster.

Then the cry of his soul, almost unreadable: P. S.: For my sake, for God's sake, take care of Jo. Dan.

Judge and Mrs. Farris spent the remainder of the night in Daniel's room, talking, thinking; thinking, talking. Mrs. Farris quivering in every muscle, as the hot tears rolled down her cheeks. They were sorely distressed and hurt. They were to respect Daniel's earnest desire, that they "try not find him."

Early the next morning his request concerning the letter addressed to Jo, was granted.

Frantically with streaming eyes, in the dim, soft glow of the early morning light; Jo, all alone in the quiet of her room, read, — reread as she spasmodically clutched her constricting throat:

Jo:

You could not help hearing the conversation last evening—parts of which are true. I do not know my mother or father, I *do* know they were good. I did not mean to deceive you—I never dreamed of doing you wrong. I always knew and felt I was all right, I did not know until last night that you—that others did not.

The ring is yours to do with as you deem best.

Please forgive any seeming wrong I did you—God knows I intended none.

Forgive and forget,

Daniel Foster.

The sharp ringing of the phone roused the Judge. "Judge Farris, can you come over at once,—Jo Byrne wants you."

"Yes," and putting Daniel's note in his pocket, he crossed the street.

As the Judge came into her room, Jo threw herself into his arms convulsed with sobs: "Tell Dan to come here. I want him. I must have him. O, Judge Farris, make Dan come to me at once."

Gently, very tenderly, the Judge stroked her hair—he knew Jo had to know the absolute truth now—knew it would be best that she should, though damnably hard. Taking her arms from round his neck, he laid her on her bed, taking one cold trembling hand in his . . .

"Listen, little Jo, listen to me. I have never seen, I never want to see, a human suffer as Daniel Foster suffered last night; is now suffering, no doubt will always suffer. He is the biggest, bravest, best man I know. You were his life, his very existence and for your sake, for your future happiness, because of his overwhelming love

for you, he thought best, thought he had to give you up, —give his life. Let me read you this, Jo. Listen to what he wrote us: 'I can not bear to ruin Jo's life. Daniel Foster no longer exists, he is dead, he goes out into the whirling throng to lose his name, his identity. He shall ever hold you in revered remembrance. Daniel Foster. For God's sake, for my sake, take care of Jo.'

"Daniel Foster no longer exists, he is dead, he goes out into the world with name changed, to lose his identity in the whirling, raging, maddening throng. I am sure he will do that very thing, he loved you too well to do otherwise. Daniel Foster no longer exists, he has lost himself, is losing himself, the chances are we will never hear from, never see him again. I do not believe that Daniel Foster will ever lower his standard, though this is enough to drive him mad; make him do anything."

"It's all my fault—oh, it's all my fault that he's gone. I should have put my arms around his neck and made him know it made no difference to me. Instead of doing that I said not a word and that made him feel I was hurt or angry.

"Oh, I'd give all I have if I could have him back and make him know I am not the least bit hurt or disappointed but love him more because of his lonely childhood. Judge Farris, I *was* dazed for the time—it was all news to me. I had only thought of Dan as an orphan and being reared by you and Mrs. Farris. I was thinking, and I am sure now I must have seemed cold and indifferent, but I did not mean to hurt him. How little he must think me! I never dreamed he would take it so seriously."

"Daniel Foster has a very high sense of honor, Jo, and he thought it would not be honorable to marry you if you thought him an outcast, an interloper as you doubtless led him to believe you thought him by your silence, and he loved you too well to suffer the pain of staying here, being forced to see you merely as an acquaintance, so he has done the only honorable thing he knew to do."

"You *must* find him. Oh, Judge, I *must* see Dan," she

said in a choking voice as the truth dawned upon her with full force—"Never see Daniel Foster again . . . ?" She could not endure such a thought, such a condition could *not* prevail. With a scream that rent the air (bringing her mother and father in terror to her room) Jo fell upon her bed in a dead faint. The condition was so profound, so prolonged, her parents became alarmed; a physician was hurriedly summoned.

The doctor pronounced her nerves in bad shape: "She has had a bad fright; her nerves are extremely taut—on the verge of snapping. Have this prescription filled at once. I will send a nurse out right away with full instructions. This room must be kept absolutely quiet, semi-dark and well ventilated for several days or the results may prove disastrous. I will see her again at noon."

Jo had begged that the Judge not leave her. He had promised. A cot was placed by the side of her bed and for seventy hours he sat by the sufferer, holding a hand or reclined on the couch if she were sleeping.

The third day Jo burst into a torrent of tears. The doctor was sure she would be better. When she grew comparatively quiet, she asked the nurse to leave her and Judge alone for a few minutes. When the door was closed behind the nurse, Jo calmly said: "Judge, Dan has gone to Robert and Ruth's or Mrs. Bishop and Uncle Rob's; please go at once and bring him to me."

"No, Jo, he is not with them. I went there the first thing the morning Daniel left, have called at noon and night, every day since, in spite of his request and our resolve not to; but I thought it right, natural that we inquire there—thought it due you. We will search no more; he begs that we do not. They have not seen him. They are as anxious and worried as we are,—you know how they loved him. Bob is hard hit."

"Daniel *must* be found. He *must* come back to me. Why, Judge, I can not live this way.

"Judge, oh, Judge! what matters it if Dan doesn't know his parentage—does that make him less a man? *We* know he is all right, a gentleman in the highest, most

complete meaning the word conveys. There is not a yellow streak of a hair's breadth in his make-up. I would stake my life, my soul on his honor, his uprightness. If I am willing to share his future, what difference should it make to any one else? I would go to the ends of the world with him and never have the least doubt or fear that I would not be treated fair, square, just, honest and with the sweetest gentleness and consideration. Oh, no one knows like I do how very gentle, good, kind and considerate he is! He has the kindest eyes I ever looked into. His voice, the touch of his hand would, I believe calm a raving maniac. I have seen little boys and girls stop crying, cease instantly from angry passions the moment he spoke to them, their grievances forgotten, by the caressing softness, the emphatic justice of his voice. His decisions, on even the most trivial things, were always given with care and kindness. I can hear him saying now: 'Wait now, little man, let's see about that,' and the 'little man' would stop, listen attentively and invariably sunshine would burst from the clouds; he would leave them all happy and satisfied." Large tears rimmed her eyes as she continued: "Why every dog and cat in this community know Dan, know his voice. The tread of his feet even, convey the kindness felt for every dumb creature. O, Judge Farris, what am I to do—what must I do—what *can* I do, without Dan? I will find him if it takes a lifetime, he did not request me not to search; and every minute of my wakeful hours will be spent looking for him."

The Judge made no comment for some moments. "Daniel Foster is all you think he is, Jo, he is the most exemplary man I know. This is certainly a most unfortunate, most deplorable condition—the most regrettable one that has ever come within my long, varied experiences. I would gladly give all I possess to have it different, have it as it should be." His bloodless face dropped low upon his breast.

Unearthly pale, stern, dryeyed she sat upon the side of her bed as he talked. Putting a hand affectionately upon

his shoulder, she said: "You must go home, Judge, you are wearied, worn out with me and thoughts of Dan. I thank you, oh, I thank you. Tell the nurse to come here as you pass out, please."

CHAPTER XV

Up to this time there had been no ebb to Daniel's enthusiastic ambitions. Casual observers or the uninformed, the unthinking, would have said: "That young man has no troubles. He is lucky; everything he does turns out well. He has only to wish or will a thing and behold it appears before him the finished product! He's just one of the favored few.

Some of the kindlier disposed, or better, those who had had kindred experiences would have said: "That young man deserves all he gets. Having been an orphan, having had such a hard, strenuous time even to exist in his early childhood, much regard is due him—he having made himself worthy."

But those who knew—if it were practical for one to really know—knew that Daniel suffered, bled and died (using the expression reverently) for the prosperity, the good-will he enjoyed.

He had made it his business to succeed.

His happiness in his romantic life had been a continuous uphill climb with nothing to cling to but the right determination to win. His joy in reaching the top had stayed at full tide—he countenanced no ebbs.

Daniel had built an impregnable exterior around his workshop of daily trials, temptations, ceaseless grind, undeserved, unnecessary hard knocks,—“man's inhumanity to man,” and allowed only the sunshine of his good nature to pass beyond the “windows of his soul,” and the contagious smile of his pleasing countenance.

He practiced temperance in all things,—the hardest accomplishment one has to undertake in these gay, care-free, joy - riding, picture - going promiscuous week - end

camping, auto-speeding, "club-smokers," muck-raking, irresponsible, dancing times; where a new kick or a different kind of thrill must accompany or result from every transaction or it is pronounced a "flat tire"—a failure.

Daniel had lived so long in the sunshine of Jo's presence and love; so long in the quiet dignity; the calm, peace, marvelously cultured atmosphere of the home-like home of the Farrises that this thunderous lightning flash blinded his vision, froze his spirit. He could not penetrate the deep darkness. His sun had set forever; there was no possible hope of another ray of light and soul warmth for him from the source from which all his light and warmth must come; all must be forever dark, cold, foreboding. He could look neither up nor out, he must look ever in and into a bottomless pit of pitch darkness, seeing, feeling, only despair.

To live in that home again in the accustomed way was unthinkable.

The grief he felt outstripped the possible. His whole nature was shocked, torn asunder by violent upheavals of his thoughts and dreams. He could not shut out their ceaseless tread through his brain. Maddening! His soul became dead—his life empty. The tearing down of bright hopes, beautiful aspirations, fell back upon him crushing him to earth, leaving him in deepest gloom. The impregnable wall was crumbling and falling all about him.

In his office—all lights extinguished, he sat in death-like immovable stare—he seemed petrified.

How long he sat there he never knew. He seemed unable to think, unable to reason. His inner-man was completely unhinged even to the separation of marrow and bone. He could not rouse himself, all his movements were automatic—he was incapable of directing his actions. All was lost to him. He was waiting for the physical end. He was waiting death. He was sure he could not exist longer in this lifeless, helpless, hopeless state, nor did he have desire to prolong life one minute,—if indeed he thought at all. His heart was a cold clay,

pressing horribly against the feeble flicker of pulsing life remaining and stifled him almost beyond sanity.

Daniel stood up, stared vacantly into the darkness no blacker than his outlook on life.

He no longer held his arms with hands clasped behind his back in uncertainty, nor folded across his chest in resolution—they fell lifelessly to his side as useless appendages, useful only to pass his hands over his pale, drawn features as if to brush away the tangled morasses of impenetrable gloom.

He passed out into the night.

He heard and saw without seeing and perceiving.

He walked on—on—

At two o'clock one morning, a cold, hard, care-worn man registered at a hotel; asked for a room on the third or fourth floor with orders that he be not disturbed until late afternoon, when a light meal of milk, toast and a fruit salad be served in his room. In the chaos of his life, enhanced by the drear loneliness and emptiness of this strange room Daniel sat bolt upright, looking straight in front, his eyes piercing, a lid never batting; then slowly automatically his arms would fold across his chest, his shoulders gradually reach the back of his chair, his eyes close as his head slowly reached his breast bowed to its extremity.

At some noise—some distraction, not hearing still he heard, he would rouse and straighten himself again to at length resume the same dejected, forsaken, lost, forgotten, stone-like attitude.

Daniel, completely saturated with violent emotions was sinking deeper and deeper into the quicksands of visionary stupor.

This secret monster was gnawing at his vitals. He had developed a disease which was eating like a cancer. The effects of which caused depression by day—despair by night.

The night when he was checking out, more than one man and woman turned to look at the tall, pale, almost

desperate looking man; whose eyes seemed dull from excess worry and loss of sleep; abnormally large by the large, dark, deep circles.

Some voices, some incidents attract one though spiritually dead, and Daniel heard, as he picked up his bag and walked through the room and out the door, in a man's low, deep-toned voice "Behold, there goes a man who has been in hell."

He stepped into a taxi and was hurriedly driven to a small neighboring town.

Going into a telephone booth he soon had his man on the line: "Robert, do not speak my name, this is Lean. Could I see you a few minutes privately in your office? Do not tell Ruth it is I who called—I am a stranger wishing to see you at the office a few minutes."

"Certainly, sir. All right, I will be right down," and both telephones clicked.

Turning from the 'phone Robert said as he put on his hat and overcoat: "Ruth, a man wishes to see me at the office a few minutes, I will not be away long." He spoke calmly enough, but his every nerve was on the qui vive as he made feverish haste to his friend.

Daniel had let himself into the outer room and was calmly waiting for Robert, whose quick steps soon resounded upon the pavement.

Without formal greeting Daniel said, as he clasped tightly Robert's hand,—“Lank, swear to me this meeting, this hour's conversation will never be divulged by you,—not one word to any one.” He paused for reply.

“You have never been unreasonable, Lean, have never done me wrong, I trust you. I swear this meeting, this hour's conversation shall never reach the outside world through me.”

They had entered the private office, both men remained standing, close, facing each other.

“Lank, only desperation forces a man to bare his heart, his life's love to another; know assuredly that such, and only such drives me to you, my friend, who has never failed me. Bob, I respect, I honor, I love you. Never

will I forget what Judge Farris, that grand, good man, said to me when we were kids, the time you and your mother were fixing to move here. I was heart-broken. He said: 'The love and respect you have for Lank and his mother are beautiful, not one atom would I lessen those feelings. Gratitude, sincere love and respect are the most beautiful attributes on earth today; cling to them, my boy, cling to them; and whether you have another thing to brighten your life or make the world a happier, better place for you to live in, they will be the beacon light which will never be dimmed through time or eternity.' I shall have just and ample cause to learn the truth, the force of those statements.

"Robert, I love Jo Byrne Allison, she has promised to be my wife—wears my ring. I love her with every atom of my being. I never thought, never dreamed, it had never been hinted to me that I had no right to love her, that I was doing her wrong. I knew I was all right and as worthy of her as any man living—no man is worthy of Jo's love. Some nights ago, while at a dance at the Club, she and I overheard a conversation something like this: 'How that Mr. and Mrs. Jo Byrne Allison can permit their daughter to go with that Daniel Foster is a mystery to me. He is a nameless tramp—doesn't know whether he is a Foster, Jones, Brown, or Smith. He is an interloper. Judge Farris is a fool—mole blind—, to allow himself to be duped by such as he.' Finished up by saying, 'Jo did not know my history or she would not, could not afford to go with me, much less marry me, for our children would be taunted for having a nameless tramp for a Daddy.' When I could endure no more, I asked Jo to let me take her home. When I touched her she shivered, shrank from the touch of my hand. I could stand no more, could not hurt her more, so I left, leaving a note for her, and for Judge and Mrs. Farris. I knew, or thought they would come direct to you and Ruth, so I stayed away, giving them time to see you so you would not look guilty or be guilty of knowing my whereabouts. Have they been to you?"

“Yes, and Dan—dear, dear Lean, they are pitiful. Jo has been ill, under the constant care of a physician and nurse. This is damnable business.”

Daniel almost lost his equilibrium, “Jo sick, suffering, calling for him—could he go on? God help him, he had to go on, he could not go back and make things worse! The worst would soon be over for her, he hoped; but how much longer could he endure such torture? His jaws clamped, his pale face grew paler, greenish white. Clinching tight his fists, he closed his eyes saying, almost roughly,—

“Hear me out quickly. Daniel Benson Foster is dead, his life, his spirit, his soul are *dead*, only the flesh remains and it registered at the hotel under this name, B. D. Retsof. Quite foreign looking isn’t it?” He showed it written upon a card of identification, his lips curled in a bitter smile—merely spell Foster backward, swap places with initials and pronounce Ret-suf—B. D. Retsof.—B. D. Retsof goes out into the maelstrom of life, Daniel Foster is no more, he has lost his identity.”

The entire suggestion was fraught with danger, disaster and death for Daniel, to Robert. He stepped back as if in revolt, and Daniel seeing the movement and *knowing*, held up his hand as one in authority, a desperate character ‘having the floor’ and hurried on:

“This is the task I would impose upon you, Lank. Write once a month to the address sent you from time to time, necessity will demand my change of residence. Send only one to one address unless authorized. If you have no time to write, merely write the date and sign your name. By that mute monthly token I shall know Jo is all right. Do not mention her name. By the monthly appearance of the plain, white envelope, post-marked here, addressed in your hand I will understand. When the envelope fails to come, then I will know that Jo married that month, then send no more, your obligation to me will then cease, only say nothing. Will you solemnly swear you will do this for me, Lank?”

The big man dropped his head,—“How funereal! How

terrible! How horrible! Do not do this thing, Lean, I beg of you."

"Nothing else I can honorably do," hissed Daniel through clinched teeth.

"Suppose I am sick or something should happen that I could not write, shall I have some one else to do it?"

"No one. I believe Robert Bishop will always as long as necessary, be able to write his name and B. D. Retsof's."

"Very well, I swear it."

"Thank you, Lank. God bless you, your home and your mother. You will know Retsof's address next month. Good-bye." A moment he clung in vice-like grip to Robert's hand, then dropping it he rushed through the door, through the outer room, into the street, leaving Robert Bishop struck dumb.

He slumped into a chair. "Daniel Foster is dead, no doubt about that. Poor Lean. How tragic, how sad for such fate to overtake such a man! 'The maelstrom of life.' No, no, Daniel Foster will assert his manhood. He may, doubtless will, get into the whirlwind, but *never* the whirl-pool, never the maelstrom. God forbid it, my friend."

CHAPTER XVI

Daniel, in his desperate loneliness, took passage for Brazil—from New Orleans, having passed through several southern states in his wanderings after leaving his home.

He landed in Rio de Janeiro, in company with a young coffee prospector from New Orleans and New York whom he found both interesting and skillful. They remained together several weeks in Rio making necessary preparations for a large business deal. Then to Sao Paulo where the complete transaction—when fully closed out—netted far more than the young prospector had dreamed possible. As a result of such unusual success

Daniel (because of the sheer force of his financial acumen) was given full rein and was asked to take charge of the next transaction, which he did on a 50-50 basis.

Daniel remained in Sao Paulo six months, doubling and redoubling his money. Soon all eyes were focused upon him as a wonder, a wizard at "gold coining".

Daniel realized very forcibly that he was becoming reckless; his entire nature rebelled against such. He refused to become dissolute. He had grown disgusted with the showy, gaudy tawdriness,—the turpitude of the motley crowd. Besides, business was growing too easy, giving too much time for personal thinking, a thing he must not, could not do. So he decided to change his place of operation and to the surprise, the consternation of the young prospector, he announced one morning (after a huge profit of the day before) his intentions of "moving on". "I have decided to try my fortune in another field, Mayo, where racial mixture is not so well favored as here, especially with the African. So long, Mayo, good luck to you."

"Good luck to you, Retsof, hate to see you go. Are there no inducements I can offer?"

"None, thank you," shaking his head Daniel reluctantly relinquished the hand he held in long, tight clasp—the hand of the man he had learned to like and admire; whose companionship had meant much in helping him forget; whose refreshing unexpected jests, peculiar phraseology and pleasantries—his humorous nothings and quaint philosophy had kept him from the madhouse. He picked up his traveling bag and walked to the station.

"Quite a strange but interesting companion," mused Mayo. "But faith! Isn't he a lucky guy? If I carried his stakes I'd never leave Brazil until I had cleaned up a few million instead of a few thousand. He *could* do it and on short notice—I say he could! If I ever saw a sure winner he is 'IT' and so dog-gone clever about it. He seems to be a reckless, dare-devil sort of fellow, though altogether self-respecting. Deals fair and square and

demands the same of the other fellow. Strictly business in business—I like it, it is the only way.

“I’ve watched him pretty closely, especially around women, and I would be willing to wager my head that a woman is responsible for this crazy *go* germ he has in such pronounced numbers in his system. No other thing on earth can cause a man to act as complete a damn fool as a woman; and the finer, the bigger, the more perfect the man, the bigger the fool. Can’t screw his conscience up or down a notch or two to suit himself to surroundings, to existing conditions in order to have a good time and forget. Some men are so sensitive, are of such tender, trusting natures, they will allow the lying deceit of one woman to embitter their whole lives. It is tragic. Any man is a *fool* to trust one. He is playing with fire and sooner or later will be burnt, warped, twisted,—and made unfit for heaven or hell.”

CHAPTER XVII

“The twenty-fifth of December—just a thousand years have been torn from my calendar of time in these few months. Ah, well, what’s the use! I had hoped that Time, that angel of mercy,—‘Time, that carries healing in his wings,’ Time, the king of all physicians, with Travel his nurse, would at least lessen, if not heal this distraught spirit of mine. I had hoped that Time would let me forget little by little until at last I would be entirely freed from this thralldom. The poets sing of such—of its conquering all things—but Time has failed to change or lessen one iota my Time, Time! Oh ‘perish the thought of a respite’! It will take eternity, not time!

“Christmas in London! There seems to be enough warmth, cheer, bright colors and lights to make every one happy, and to all appearances all are happy,—surely I can be too.” And suiting action to the thought he got up, put on his overcoat, drew and buttoned it closely

around his tall form, after first arranging his scarf, then turning the collar well up round his ears, taking his hat, he went out and into a place, provided himself with the cup that cheers and inebriates, then went slowly, quietly to his room and made ready for bed. Holding the bottle high he poured the liquid into the glass in a small stream almost drop by drop. As the last drop fell into the glass he, with unsteady hand set the bottle on the table, held the glass between him and the light. A hollow, mirthless, Satanic laugh burst from his leering lips as he addressed it: "So much is required to satiate your maw, O, Despair, 'than which there is no greater vulture.' No one more unfortunate than he who knows not his birthright, 'it were better for that man had he never been born' and living should have a ball and chain for an anklet and dropped in the deepest hole in the Pacific ocean, any other body of water would be too small, too shallow." Then draining the glass he finished, "All hope abandon, ye who enter here," and falling across the bed he fell into a deep sleep.

Another entry is made in B. D. Retsof's ledger of Despair.

CHAPTER XVIII

"Judge, Mother and Daddy are going to Nashville to spend the late spring and early summer with brother Frank and sister Lela and I do not want to go. Can't I stay with you and Mrs. Farris? If you will ask me they will not make me go; please ask me quick, I see them coming, they are here"

"Sure, Jo, so glad to have you. You *must* stay if they go and you do not want to . . . Come in folks, how are you?"

Without giving anyone a chance to speak, Jo rushed to her parents saying, "Daddy, Judge Farris has asked me to stay with them instead of going to Nashville, so I won't have to go with you, will I? I just feel like I would

smother in those narrow streets—"and she fanned herself with her hands as if smothering at the thought.

"Why, Jo Byrne, it was especially for you we were making this visit.

"Well, don't go then, for I do not want to go, especially as you have decided to go through the country."

"We have written Frank and Lela we would be there, what will they think?"

"They will not care, Daddy, they will not care. But if you think they will, you and Mother go on, I'll"

"I have it Joie"—Mrs. Farris had heard most of the conversation as she came in the door, "I have it. Alston called up yesterday afternoon and asked his father and me to go with him, Lucy, little Al, and a few friends on a yachting cruise from Florida to Maine, to be gone about a year, they have been planning the trip for some time but have just now gotten their affairs in shape so they could be away for so long. I could not tell him then, as I did not know whether the Judge could go or not and was just writing our acceptance—come with us?"

"How glorious!" Jo showed more real enthusiasm, more interest in life than at any time since Daniel had been gone. "Now I will enjoy *that*. Thank you, dear Mrs. Farris," and she kissed that thoughtful woman's cheeks, patted her hands. Going to her father she kissed his cheek. "May I go? say I can, oh, I know I can. I have never been on a cruise. I have always wanted to go on one and this is the very best opportunity I will ever have," and the questioning appealing eyes won consent.

Jo had traveled much the past twelve months. An ungovernable desire to *go*, go to public gatherings, to eat in public places (a thing she disliked to do, promiscuously, before) had taken absolute possession of her. Though the mania was never referred to, one did not have to question who saw her eyes watch every tall figure, look earnestly at all passers-by: pedestrians, automobilists, passengers to and from trains—everywhere.

The proposed trip of a year on the water with only an occasional stop for sight seeing, would lessen the nervous

expectant tension, very materially they thought. Thus the consent of the parents was not hard to obtain. Mr. and Mrs. Allison were glad, delighted that Joe would be so pleasantly situated with such lovely people, for so long. Yet, a year would not be long, if the sparkle were brought back to her tired eyes, the color to her pale cheeks, the sprightliness to her lagging steps, mirth into her laughter. The months of Daniel's absence had been grievous ones to both families, almost death to the darling of both households.

The cruise had been uneventful so far as outside interests were concerned, but most eventful for those fortunate enough to be aboard the Merribird,—the days had passed into weeks the weeks into months before any of them realized how near they were to the end of the upward journey.

"Can anything in nature be more beautiful than those clouds hanging in fantastic shapes, with that gorgeous sunset glow against them, as it descends behind those tall trees? Come, Judge, get the view from here too."

"It is certainly a most beautiful picture Jo, in fact I think these inlets and bays on the coast which we so leisurely pass are magnificent, as attractive as any we have had anywhere en route, as beautiful as any I have ever seen. The only objection I have is this heavy wind. I don't think it has blown less than fifty-five or sixty miles an hour since we struck the coast of Maine. I heard the captain suggest to Alston that we retrace our course on account of these blows and I hope Alston will abide by his suggestion. We will then be rid of the heavy disagreeable wind and give us a chance to view the scenery along the Rappahannoc, for there are some points of interest there I would delight in seeing—we all would, I am sure. It will give us more time for our other stop-overs, for Alston says we are to cruise the Potomac as far up as Washington and Georgetown, with several other interesting stops of historic lore on our homeward journey, which will include Hampton Roads and Newport

News. Give us more time in Maryland and Virginia, there are so many places and things there that would interest as well as delight us. And, by the way, Alston, I have two old college friends in Richmond. Tom Brice and Julian Moore—you've heard me speak of them so often. We can go see them. You will like them Jo—all of you—they are gentlemen of the old school, polished and educated, not only in books, but experience.

"Look there to your left, Jo, how does that compare to your last 'perfect picture?'"

"They all seem perfect—all *are* perfect in their different ways. But, Judge, do you know, I do not believe any views will surpass those of the Hudson. No adjectives were available to me to describe such grandeur, such feelings of awe and uplift as I had. Such love, respect and adoration I felt, as I beheld them, for the Being that made, and fosters them."

On the homeward journey the landscapes seemed entirely different, did not look the same to Jo Byrne as on the upward journey. She was always on the alert for the ever-changing beauties of nature made by the ever-changing shades and shadows of sunshine and clouds on mountain, hill and plain with their accompanying adjuncts.

"I wonder how I happened to miss noticing specially the scenery along here, for it is absorbingly enchanting. I thought I had seen everything. How do you account for it?"

"We passed here at midnight is the only rational reason I can offer, Joie, at you missing seeing anything of the beauties we have passed so long as daylight prevailed," laughed the Judge. "The captain planned his schedule so as to make the points of special interest in the day coming back, that we passed in the night on our upward journey."

"How very thoughtful, how very glad I am that he did, for this one view is worth the trip to see. That high like promontory with its chalk like sides, that tall pine, stand-

ing lone sentinel, on what seems to be the very highest point; with that lone buzzard flying lazily around it; with those lovely, those beautifully gorgeous, many colored reflections of sun on cloud and sky; with those receding hills in the distance, is simply indescribably, superbly grand. I don't see how any view in the Alps or anywhere else in the world could equal, certainly not surpass it. See it's entirely different now, as we made that slight turn. The buzzard got too dreamily lonesome and called for company, I guess, for there is another one and still another, that you can scarcely see as yet, merely a black speck against that cerulean blue.

"Mrs. Farris does it seem we have been on this trip with its many happy hours of unexcelled joys and pleasures,—oh, I can't even begin to enumerate (I am truly glad I have kept a full, complete diary)—almost ten months? I hate to think of the end being so near, only six weeks more of this unalloyed bliss"—a deep sigh escaped Jo's lips. "That sigh sounded exactly like a complaint, didn't it, but it is not, it is just the biggest, best way I can tell you how very wonderful it has all been to me. Alston, you and Lucy will never be able to realize, never be able to understand what this trip has meant to me.

"As the time is drawing so near for us to disband and give up this luxurious mode of living and gliding over the water—and—as I am not dressed for the street, I do not believe I will go with you two, Judge and Alston, shopping this morning, I will stay right here, letting you enjoy this outing without the accompaniment of a woman. You needn't thank me, 'the pleasure is all mine, thank you,'" laughed Jo as she waved them on. "It is entirely too pleasant, too lovely here and I am too comfortable to leave," she continued as the men insisted that she get her hat and come with them. "We will go next time, won't we Mrs. Farris?—Nothing artificial on land can be half so pretty as that," she pointed at some visionary picture. "It might be as interesting, but I like

nature's glories best." And Jo Byrne stretched her feet further out, her head further back and began talking as she squinted first one eye and then the other getting every possible, varying angle of views. She delighted in transforming into word pictures, for the others, the imaginative things she saw, who enjoyed immensely the representations drawn of the ever changing scenes punctured with her light chatter.

Jo had changed wonderfully the past few months, her improvement was almost simultaneous with the beginning of the cruise. Her merry laughter rang out many times a day. She never tired of springing some surprise on the older ones, especially the Judge who loved to hear and see her refreshing originality. Her ideas were clever, entirely her own: a check had never been put on her individuality. But the Judge's eyes always held an expression of more or less sadness whenever he looked upon her, for he never saw her that he did not think of Daniel Foster.

CHAPTER XIX

A bright eyed baby boy had come to take up his abode in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bishop. "Let's name him Daniel Foster, Ruth?"

"If you wish it, dear, but I so wanted Robert, Jr."

Kneeling by the bedside of his wife Robert took her in his arms, kissed her neck, eyes, lips, hair. "Thank you, my brave darling. Could any man have more cause to be happy and rejoice in that happiness than I?"

To Robert's utter surprise, when he came into his wife's room several hours later, he heard the baby referred to as "little Dan," "baby Dan."

With all the love of his passionate soul beaming from his face, he hurried to the bed, "O, Ruthie dear, call him Robert if you wish it, do not do so much for me, I cannot ask it, cannot let you."

"Daniel is a sweet, dear name and I loved Daniel Fos-

ter almost as well as you did. I wish it as it is." Robert leaned over and very reverently kissed her lips; then turning, took the tiny hand of the squirming mite of humanity, as he was being held by the nurse before a bright, blazing fire and kissing the soft baby fingers hurriedly left the room—and for the post office. It was the second of the month—Robert had forgotten, until this moment, to mail the long white envelope he had in his pocket addressed to B. D. Retsof. The first day of every month for eleven months, since the strange request was made, a letter had been dropped in the post office or a mail box, addressed in Robert Bishop's hand-writing and sent to B. D. Retsof to the different addresses given. Different mail boxes and post offices were chosen to avoid suspicion as Daniel had requested.

"But what man wouldn't have forgotten at such a time," reflected Robert as he hurried on. "I will take this short route, go through this shop cutting off three blocks. Why did I leave my car at the office? Well, a man is liable to do anything when a Daniel Foster Jr. is calling," he smilingly thought to himself, when, bur-r-r-! A broken belt came whizzing across space with all force, striking him squarely across the breast, hurling him through space, out and on the street, breaking both arms (the right in two places) several ribs and rendering him unconscious for some minutes. When he recovered his senses he had been given first aid while waiting a policeman and physician. When the doctor arrived Robert said: "Have an officer call 1259-J, my mother. Tell her not to tell my wife, she is sick, understand? but tell mother to hurry down here."

The policeman turned to go phone the message when the doctor interrupted, "Tell her to B . . . hospital, officer, we are taking him there. He's in bad shape, got to get straightened out at once; hole in side of head has been overlooked. I know his wife, she is in no condition for excitement of any kind; better get a taxi go get his mother and bring her back with you. What's your mother's address, Mr. Bishop?"

"314 Park Place. Before that officer goes I want to talk with him doctor," said Robert.

"Here officer, be quick about it, he wishes to speak privately with you. Make it snappy."

"Officer, a very important business letter in a long white envelope in my coat pocket must be mailed at once, get it out, please; left hand side, and drop it in the box at Hill's corner; it's your nearest box. Attend to it at once and without fail."

"Sure, be glad to."

"Thanks."

For two months the "important business letter," reposed in the pocket of the big-hearted, obliging, but forgetful officer. It being carefully removed while the suit was being cleaned and pressed and as carefully replaced with other letters and circulars when the suit was returned.

Another month, the long white envelope failed to be sent B. D. Retsof. Robert Bishop had developed pneumonia, deep seated, empyemia resulting; the right hand could not write, neither the left and he had sworn no other should address an envelope to B. D. Retsof. Had he known the last one he *had* addressed was still in the policeman's pocket he would have broken faith and had the negro janitor, nurse or policeman himself address just one.

CHAPTER XX

"Will you please look again carefully and see if you have a letter for me—B. D. Retsof,—a business letter in a long white envelope?"

"Be glad to. No, sir, no letter for you."

"Thank you." And turning 'round the whole world was in one giant whirl. Supporting himself as best he could against one of the columns Daniel Foster pressed one hand hard over his eyes and remained very still for some time.

He must get to his room—take the elevator, he could not walk up. The boy asked him at the landing,—“Sick ain’t you?”

“Yes, have a boy sent to my room at once—393.

“A week over due, but, I will not give up, I will *not*! She has not forgotten, she cannot forget in less than a year. O, Jo! My God, is it true ‘a woman’s vows are writ in sand?’ If you have any mercy left, for Christ’s sake have mercy on me,—I cannot even hope for death. Surely there is no suffering comparable to thoughts of happiness indulged in hours of utter hopelessness.

“Come in. Can I get you to get me some good whiskey?”

The boy looked as if he preferred not to, however a what-is-it-to-me expression surmounted his face as he came forward for the bill Daniel held out to him. “I want the best. I prefer Scotch, if you can’t get that, get the best brand you can. Understand?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Well hurry. I may not need it tonight or never, but I want it when I do need it and the very best—understand?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Close the door. Have some iced water brought up.” Daniel sat as one in a daze until the door was opened by the boy with the bottle. Raising his eyes without raising his head he said: “Put the bottle on the table with everything necessary for a drink, when I need it, near the bed. Thanks. I do not wish to be disturbed. Call me at six if I have any mail, otherwise do not. That is all.”

The cork remained untouched. Daniel Foster existed another night, another day—a week.

A month longer he remained in the place (longer than anywhere since leaving Brazil) hoping the delayed letter would finally reach him.

The first of the month—a week. “There’s no mistaking. Robert has made no mistake; *he* has not failed me;

he has kept his oath. O, Jo, my only love, my darling, how could you!" The last flickering ray of hope gone—!

Again the "maw of despair" demanded full pay; again another sad entry in B. D. Retsof's ledger of despair. The cork was drawn, the glass filled, refilled—oblivion for many hours.

Rousing himself from the stupor, a lethargy which had lasted well into the next day, Daniel lay for a long while lifeless. No plans, no hopes for the future, not even the momentary joy of receiving and opening the long white envelope, reading the few unnaturally friendly lines from Robert, once a month. The only spark of life left to him worth living for, gone! Hours he listlessly dragged about the room, finally he dreamily, languidly pulled himself together, dressed himself for travel, packed his bag and left for, he knew not, cared not where. The last chapter had been written for him, the *finis* written in bold clear type, the irrevocable End so far as he was concerned. The hardest, severest, most difficult travel would suit his feelings best—so he found himself going east—seeing but little. The unending days, nights, weeks, months of travel, feeling only the sickening thud of his heart above the heat, cold and other discomforts he experienced on his long, rambling travel,—until he found himself in the quiet, genial atmosphere of the Hawaiians.

In Honolulu, one noon, when he had been there about a month, without a spark of energy in his lifeless body, he strolled into a place for lunch. He found the place comparatively empty. Selecting a table well off to itself, he hung up his hat, seated himself, and picked up a newspaper that had been left by some one—"An old paper from the states. Well, not so far away after all, let's see how old it is,—Why, not old at all—November 4, 1927. Some one lost it for here is a place marked 'Buck Up,' by Edgar Guest,—don't specially care for Edgar's poetry but believe I will see what attraction 'Buck Up' had for the owner of this paper.

‘Buck Up. The demon of despair.

Is stronger than your strongest foe,’
Well it’s the devil all right.

‘Shake off the shackles which you wear,
Stand up and give life blow for blow.’

“Shackles!—You Daniel Foster, alias B. D. Retsof, shackled? Another truth, well I guess so . . . Yes, ‘stand up—give life blow for blow.’ How can one stand with nothing to stand upon? Not even a name to cling to much less stand upon,—and besides one blow like this is a complete knock out, no chance for a return blow, no come back.

‘Take failure now, tomorrow too,
And then the next day if you must
But watch that chap inside of you.
He is the one you mustn’t trust.’

“‘Take failure’—well, I failed all right, a failure to last to the end of time.

‘The vicious fellow of your mind,
That whispers craven hints, and tries
With artful cowardice to bind
Your hands and arms and blind your eyes
Needs watching more than outer foes,
Far greater injury he’ll do.
He’ll steal the courage from your blows,
And make a coward out of you.’

“Yes, vicious fellow of my mind,—coward. ‘He will steal the courage out of you.’ Daniel Foster a coward? Courage stolen . . . ?

‘Get your vision straight, enemy with you day and night,

Wails “all is lost,” hope is vain.
Buck up. One victory wipes out
A hundred failures gone before;
Heed not the little voice of doubt
That sickly whispers: “Try no more.”
Watch that demon of distress

Which seeks to make a wreck of you.
Your thoughts are stronger than your foes

They will weaken you, they'll impose
New fears upon you, day by day,
Who gives his mind unto despair,
Lodges a foeman in his brain.
Buck up. Tomorrow may be fair,
For cowards only hope is vain.'

"'Coward,' how I do hate that word, and 'for cowards only hope is vain.'

"Am I a coward? What have I done of cowardly nature? Not knowing my parentage; having been in an orphan's home, not knowing how I got there; having been a tramp, but never a beggar (I do not recall of ever asking any one for anything except the drink of water asked at the store where I bought my first dinner; the dime's worth of apples, the nickel's worth of cheese and crackers); having been a poor bootblack, living in the home of an equally poor one and his over-worked mother,—was I a coward to attach myself to Judge Farris' train?

"Was I?

"To the unbiased, unprejudiced, honest convictions of my heart—the judgment of my best reason, I am sure I was not.

"Was I a coward to aspire to be a great judge, to aspire to be like, to emulate the best, the wisest man I know?

"Was I?

"My best judgment and reason back me up in thinking, I was not.

"Was I a coward to love Jo Byrne Allison? Was I? It came so naturally, so sweetly, so unprovoked. Was it cowardly? In my super-selfish, super-sensitive nature wherever she is concerned, I cannot believe I was a coward to love Jo.

"Was I a coward to leave Judge and Mrs. Farris—that grand father and mother of Israel, whom I know loved me—who had done so much for me—whom I know my leaving hurt, for Robert said, 'Dan they are pitiful, this is damnable business.' Was it cowardly in me?

“Was I a coward to leave the woman I love, who in her sweet womanliness gave herself body and soul to me? To leave her without a word, to suffer not only for me, but because of me? O, God, *am* I a coward? Should I have stayed on, relinquished all right, all claim to her and just lived on a mere friend, eking out a miserable existence?

“I may be a coward, maybe I am, but I am sure I would have been worse than a coward had I remained. I could not have looked upon Jo without my desire for her overcoming every other desire in life. I would have been a murderer for I would have snatched any man limb from limb who would have touched her. God forgive me, I am a man. You gave me this nature, I tell you I would have killed him! But I left her without giving her a chance, left her to suffer the ‘slings and arrows of contemptuous’ cruel gossip, and to the prying, scrutinizing, sleuth, hawk-like eyes of slander and discord—which to her sensitive nature must have been, must be horrible. But, I did right, did the lesser of two evils. I do not believe I am a coward, yet—I was not strong enough, I lacked courage, stamina, I lacked sufficient manhood to hold myself in check. I drowned my brain in drink, sank very low, simply for the reward of one night’s relief from maddening thoughts. Did it pay?

“And good faithful Robert. Did I act cowardly toward him, thrusting a request sealed by an oath, upon him which he loathed—hated? Leaving him almost roughly. And, dear Mrs. Bishop, my foster mother—the ones who so generously, so unquestioningly shared their shelter, poverty and rags with me,—leaving her without a word of explanation, without a word of good-bye. It is true I tried to remunerate them from the time I was self-sustaining, though the deeds they performed are not commensurate—cannot be balanced with gold, position or power,—‘Of all sad words of tongue or pen,’ surely there can be no sadder than ‘It might have been.’

“Yes, all things considered, I have proven myself very weak. Yet . . . ” Several minutes passed, then taking

his hat he passed out and up to his room, where, without relenting, the painful reflections moved on.

"The first of November, how near Thanksgiving, then Christmas again." (What floods of memories engulfed him). "The 'gnawing tooth of time' it is called. It is gnawing, no disputing that, but without a sign of diminution of—of what I feel. I do not believe I can spend another Thanksgiving, another Christmas in a foreign world, regardless of all preparations to do just that. I believe I will spend this Thanksgiving, this Christmas in the States—which one, where and how I cannot even remotely guess."

Another long pause.

"Let's see. I have about circumnavigated the globe. I believe I will start back around, letting the departure of the first out-going steamer determine my route," he laughed a hollow, mirthless laugh. "Doesn't that sound like a big, strong man of decision and character?"

"Yes, as delightful as your climate, O, Honolulu. As beautiful as your broad streets and parks gorgeous with giant, indescribably lovely flowers; your schools, churches; your energetic brown skins hurrying and scurrying to load and unload freighters; the boys diving for coins; your Chinatown with its bespeckled, motley crowds in 'holokus'; your Japs with swinging baskets piled high with delicious, juicy fruits, I am going to leave you.

"That's the third time you have scampered in front of my door. I have a great mind to kidnap you, you little scalawag of a Kanaka, your eyes and pearly teeth remind me of—

"I am beginning to like 'poi' . . . Hawaiian music, too. 'O, Honolulu, an American loves you,—your ukuleles, too'—something dreamy like and soothing in your atmosphere, but—I am going to leave you. I don't know who christened you the 'Paradise of the Pacific' but you are rightly named. Honolulu I will come back to you some day.

"Yes, I believe I will do just that, as childish, as sense-

less as it may seem; simply a reckless, daring, don't care sensation that I have, yet I feel exactly like I will enjoy it. *Enjoy* did I say? Yes, enjoy doing it. When I get to the state to which I am going, I will settle down to permanent work, and at least be able to think well of myself, which will be *some* satisfaction.

"Jo is married. I wonder to whom, yet, I wouldn't know for the world. All thought of her must be supplanted by others that will not make me so everlastingly gloomy, foreboding, demoniacal. But memory will not down, will not yield. It clings with the tenacious tenacity of the devil!"

He gritted his teeth, clinched his fists. Then he slowly relaxed. From a distance he heard the soft, sweet, clear strains of *Leibestraum*, whether from piano or orthophonic he could not determine. It was beautiful. Jo had played it so often for him. How restful, how soul-satisfying she had played it. Taking up his hat and coat, he started for the open. As he approached the door, someone quite near began singing, in perfect English "Are You Thinking of Me Tonight?"—and the last strains of the *Leibestraum* were dying away in the distance. "The devil must be my guiding spirit—surely this program is made to order strictly for my undoing. How much more, my God, how much more!" Daniel grew sick, every vestige of color had left his face, his head drooped. He strolled in dream-like stride out and on to the street. He walked for miles entirely oblivious of time, place, distance or direction. He walked until a stream of water barred his path. Sitting upon its bank, he looked out over the quiet, peaceful valley, bright with flowers—sat until the shades of night shut from view only near objects, except the lights from the distant city. Still he sat thinking, thinking. He was sick with longing. Slowly he clambered to his feet, shook himself, got his bearings and began to retrace his steps and went straight to the transportation bureau. He looked over the schedule and made reservations on a liner booked to leave that midnight, bound for San Francisco, California. He came

back, hurriedly packed his bags, checked out and going down town, had dinner in a small cafe near the landing where he checked his baggage, then went to a play (the first one he had attended since leaving home) returning just a few minutes before leaving time.

CHAPTER XXI

"Doctor, Robert Bishop is not recovering as rapidly as a man of his physique should and I'd like for you to meet me at the hospital in the morning and look him over. I know he has had an uphill grade from the first—all the odds were against him; but I have never seen a finer specimen of a sure enough he-man—he's as clean in mind and body as a hound's tooth."

"Harris, I expect he is worried about his wife, you know there is a tiny baby in their home."

"O, yes, I know and that *may* be the trouble, but I should think not, for both mother and child are doing nicely. She had the baby—a fine little fellow, out to see him yesterday."

"Yes, I know, but you know how some men are about home, and I expect he is one of that kind. It can't be finances—he's in fine shape, has his business down to such mathematical exactness and precision that it can go on indefinitely without him. However, I will see him with you at the hospital in the morning, at say—nine o'clock."

"Very well, that time suits me. Thanks."

"Well, Bishop, I have brought another doctor to look you over and see how much longer before you will be out dancing the Charleston. I think you might be carried home tomorrow if you care to go, but we will wait to hear his verdict."

"Bishop, I think you could stand the trip all right, but hadn't you rather stay on here and recuperate a week or two longer?"

"I had rather be home than anywhere on earth, doctor, but my wife is not very strong and I fear she might worry about my condition. It would make no difference how many nurses I had, my wife would assume all responsibilities, both as to my welfare and comfort and the nurses', so for her sake I had best stay here until I can be independent of attendants. I feel almost as helpless as a baby yet and it riles me. Two months now of almost absolute helplessness, and I feel like it will be two years before I get back to normal at the rate I am going."

"You were badly bunged up, Bishop, for three weeks we were in a doubt as to 'which way the cat was going to jump.' Two arms, with compound fractures each and several smashed ribs, to say nothing of a large hole in the head (which gave us more concern for a few days than all your other trouble) is a right big menu within itself—few men could have gone through so much as nicely as you have. Then add to that lobar pneumonia with empyema—which within itself takes an exceptionally strong constitution to combat. Yet, notwithstanding all that, you made the up grade without a flicker as long as you didn't know darkness from daylight—your head from a hole in the ground; but when your brain began to hit on all cylinders you began to slacken speed, so we came to the natural conclusion you were badly worried about something—possibly your wife and baby whom we assure you are 100 per cent all right."

"I am so glad they are, thanks to you both. *I have been* worried."

"Well, just banish the worry and we will let you go home when you please. One of us will see you this afternoon. So long, Bishop. Put this patient on full feed, nurse."

"All right, doctor, I, too, think he deserves a full tray."

Left to himself Robert began to take stock of his condition. "I must fight this worry, I am treating Ruth and my babies wrong. But poor Lean! What in the world will become of him? As long as I heard from him once

a month I felt he was all right, even though he was a wanderer. I felt he would come back home some day, but now—! He's had enough to drive him goofy. I could not blame him for anything he would do.

"Just so he is every whit a man, what difference ought it make to anyone what his father's name was,—whether he came over in the Mayflower, or not, or was first cousin to Pocahontas or Captain Kidd. I know he is a thousand times better than some who claim they are related to those of Mayflower and Revolutionary fame,—to kings and presidents. O, I'd give all I possess to know Dan's address, so I could send the envelope with just the date and my signature if nothing more!"—mused Robert Bishop as he turned his body with a tired, weary motion toward the wall and went to sleep.

CHAPTER XXII

"You are a very sick man, Mr. Foster, but if you will follow my instructions and do as Miss Rawls says—obey her orders to the letter—there is no reason in the world why you should not be all right in a week or ten days."

"I'll do my best, doctor, though I am bad about taking orders. Good bye."

"Miss Rawls, will you phone this, to this phone address, for me please and tell me the reply."

As she read the message Miss Rawls shook her head saying, "Mr. Foster, the doctor forbade just this. Mr. Rush is a lawyer and you must not be disturbed by anyone, much less lawyers."

"He is a special friend of mine, he will not be here long. His visit will not disturb me, in fact it will do me good, will get things off my mind that worry me, so, of course, retard my improvement," he tactfully added.

"I will ask the doctor, if he says so—all right." The 'phone clicked. He heard—"Doctor, Mr. Foster wants his lawyer friend, Mr. Rush, to see him for only a few

minutes early this morning. He says the visit will benefit him as he wishes to rid his mind of some business that is bothering him—his pulse? A little quick, almost normal. Temperature?—just a little rise.—Yes, I believe so, too. Thank you.”

“Mr. Foster, Mr. Rush was in and will call by on his way to his office. The doctor said a short visit would not hurt you.”

“Thank you. Will you have Henry bring that table and put it just here; have him bring plenty of paper, the large note paper kind, then place that chair by the table with floor lamp near so we can have artificial light if necessary. Thank you, Miss Rawls.”

“Draw your chair up close, Rush. If you sit just here, that glare from the window (which is annoying) won’t bother us—the nurse doesn’t want the shade down. Thanks.

“Rush, you know the calamitous skeleton in my closet. I have been quite sick several days, the doctors say I will soon be terra firma again. I believe I will. But such sudden acute attacks, such pronounced abnormalities in my system are likely to prove fatal any time—I want you to fix some legal papers for me.

“You remember I’ve always believed my boy is living, is well and somewhere in this country—I still believe it and more strongly now—especially the past few weeks, than ever before. I want you to take this data, connect it up properly—it’s all marked and dated. Have it typed in black ink—two or three copies. Then I want my will rewritten. Everything goes to my boy, except the revenue from the place at Brooklyn which remains as it is, those are the only changes.

“If I should die suddenly, *this* fund is set aside for advertising. I want this, in this blue envelope, printed in every paper, both secular and religious, every magazine in the country and with the reward offered, the fortune awaiting them, maybe in that way, my boy can be found. That is all of that. Now I want you to send that fel-

low, Ben Lewis, to me this afternoon. He is out of town this morning. Tell him to come about four as I am usually feeling better about that time. Attend to this at once, Rush. I thank you for coming so promptly—. Good bye."

Miss Rawls coming in sometime after found the patient quietly sleeping. She went softly out, closing the door—the first natural sleep he had had in a week. Taking a book she sat near the door, so as to hear the first noise of awakening.

"Mr. Foster, I believe Mr. Rush used some slight-of-hand, some magic on you. You've had a nice, long refreshing nap of nearly three hours. Your pulse is a little quick, but your temperature is normal; your eyes are brighter and clearer than since you've been here, the same can be said of your skin; it looks less leathery, your hands and nails more natural. In fact, I think you can see, without fear of hurt, Mr. Ben Lewis who has just 'phoned and said he would be here at four-fifteen."

"Thanks, Miss Rawls. You doctors and nurses don't know what's best for a fellow every time, do you? I told you I knew what I needed to make me well again, didn't I?" laughed Mr. Foster.

"You did and seemed to have hit it exactly correct this time. There's the bell—4:15—I guess it's your friend, Mr. Lewis."

"Show him in and don't let us be disturbed. He has only a few minutes and it's important that we finish our business this afternoon."

"Close that door and lock it, Lewis. Thanks."

"Lewis, did you ever hear the negroes sing a song one line of which goes something like this: 'Bless God, my burden's been rolled away.'"

"Yes, something like that—, felt the same way at times myself."

"Well, that's exactly the way I feel now. I have a hunch or a presentiment or whatever you want to call it, that I want you to go to California—San Francisco is

the place, I feel sure. You know things often happen by chance which one would not even dare hope for. This is chance, and I have hope. I want you to go to every restaurant, hotel, lunch-stand, cafe, cafeteria,—hang around the depot lots—and the first man you see who comes nearest answering this description manage to meet him, eat at the table with him,—get near him some way, near and familiar enough to have him hear *this* story,”—holding up a scroll—

“In my ‘minds’ eye’ I see a tall, slender fellow about six feet, weight about 155-160; swathy, but clear skin, brown eyes, straight, soft, dark brown, almost black hair; carrying himself well with quick, springy, easy stride. You know the story and can tell it well; but for fear something has slipped your memory, here is a new copy with which you can refresh your brain. I want you to leave for the Pacific coast tonight, or as soon as you can manage. Keep me posted, especially changes in address. I believe Daniel Benson Foster, Jr., will be with me before he is twenty-seven years old. Good luck to you, Ben is my most earnest desire—my prayer.”

“Thanks, Foster, for your sake, if for nothing else, I wish it too. I can’t leave before noon tomorrow; by waiting ’till then I can make better time.”

“All right.”

CHAPTER XXIII

As sometimes happens in large waiting rooms and assembly halls where noise and quiet prevail by turns—a lull, almost as weird and uncanny as the calm before a cyclonic storm, occurs, everything seems to stop at exactly the same moment for only a second of time, but long enough for the silence to be distinctly noticed—almost felt. Such was the quiet in the waiting room at the railroad station in San Francisco, California, when a full, round, deep-toned voice which carried well, broke the silence.

"Stop that, you jackanapes! If you touch or laugh at that boy again, I will thrash you with my cane within an inch of your life."

A group of three men standing near the entrance hearing the remark stepped to the opening and looked in the direction from whence the sound came, just in time to see a tall, well dressed fellow grasp a youth of fifteen or sixteen by the collar, whirl him around and give him a good shake.

The younger fellow prying himself free from the relaxing grasp, sulkily, sneeringly said as he jerked himself away, "Take your hands off me, what have you got to do with it?"

"I will show you if you strike him again," and looking intently at the boy for several seconds as if to impress unmistakably that he meant what he said the man turned on his heels, put the cane under his arm, hat at comfortable angle, walked off and into the waiting room.

The three men eyed him closely,—one was indelibly impressed. "Stranger in these parts, striking looking fellow," was the criticism passed round.

Mr. Ben Lewis' brain was electrified with: "The first man you see answering more nearly this description: tall, slender fellow, about six feet, weight about 155-160; swathy, but clear skin, brown eyes, soft, brown hair, almost black; carrying himself well with quick, springy, easy strides;—watch him, latch onto him, get with him, learn his name; tell him *this* story. Remember things oftentimes happen by chance which one would not dare hope for. This is chance, and I hope,—San Francisco, California is the place."

He mentally concluded, "The man answers the description as perfectly, as exact as if he had been standing before Foster while he was describing him. Now for the encounter."

The stranger had gone to the news stand for a cigar. Mr. Lewis casually sauntered up, asked the brands of cigars carried, paid for two. Put one in his pocket, got the other ready to light; felt in his pocket for his match

box, not finding it said quite audibly, but so that none could hear save the stranger: "Now I wonder if I have lost *that*." The stranger looked around, discovered what the *lost that* was and offered his box.

"Thanks."

Smoking in silence for a few seconds, Mr. Lewis made bold to remark, "I enjoyed your little concert."

"Mistaken identity, I guess—I've been in no concert."

"I refer to the little one act drama on the corner, a few minutes since—the little newsy and the bully"

"O, yes," the stranger said with laconic smile, "I had forgotten the incident."

"I do not think I will forget it soon, if ever. It reminded me so much of a very sad, true story in real life, one of the characters in the story being one of my best friends. Very interesting—very pathetic—very tragic."

As if to himself the stranger softly drawled—"Sometimes I wonder if every one's life is a tragedy."

"No, indeed, I've seen lots of comedies," laughed Mr. Lewis. "But it's true, as Longfellow says: 'Into each life some rain must fall, some days must be dark and dreary.' We would not appreciate spring, if 'it were always spring,' you know."

The stranger flipped the ashes from his cigar and made a move as if to go—Mr. Lewis hurriedly remarked: "I came in here for a sandwich and coffee, won't you join me?"

"I was on my way to a restaurant when that bully slapped and cuffed that little boy. It flew all over me, so I interferred—like a fool, I guess—cop's business, but it's done. I had as soon lunch here as anywhere."

"Live here?"

"Been here only a short time, about a week."

"Frisco's a nice town, you will like it."

"Yes, I think so. Your home?"

"No, I am on a business trip. I've been here nearly a month and like it better every day. The climate is perfect. Enchanting scenery; I like it. Really since you have mentioned restaurant, I believe I want something

more substantial than a sandwich. Which restaurant do you prefer?"

"Any of them, makes not a particle of difference. I find them all about alike."

As they leisurely walked to the restaurant Mr. Lewis knew a conversation of comparative interest must be kept up if he held his companion, he wouldn't stand for the too light, too long. "If you have not already been through it, you must see the Ferry Building. Also the fruit and vegetable cannery. You must visit Golden Gate park. It is the most beautiful I have ever seen, I venture the most beautiful in the world. Suppose we drop in here and order a full dinner. I think you will pronounce this a little different. Splendid food, quickly served, excellent service all round."

Mr. Lewis' eyes fell upon a table in a quiet, less crowded place. He piloted his friend straight to it going as slowly as courtesy would permit. He was sizing up his man trying to find resemblances of action and feature—and he thought he saw both, was reasonably sure of some. He sat at an angle so as to watch the unsuspecting stranger from a reflected mirror, as well as direct, without being detected, and where he could best watch his face as he told his story. He was determined the story should be told at this sitting.

When the meal was served and Mr. Lewis was reasonably sure of no interruption he said

"You remind me somewhat of my friend in the story of which I spoke a few minutes before,—so muchly so, that the little episode keeps bobbing up in my mind"

"What is your story? I like a good one, if it is not too full of stale jokes," interrupted B. D. Retsof, as he made himself comfortable. He placed his napkin across his knee; drew his plate squarely in front of him; glanced at his companion to see if he were settled; took his fork as he eyed the food, mentally satisfied that if the taste compared favorably with the looks there would be no cause for complaint . . .

"Not a joke in this one, nothing stale about it. It is real, absolute living life."

"Sounds interesting. Long?"

"No, not so long. A lifetime to live it, only a short while to tell it."

Mr. Lewis lost no time—the story began. Interest in the stranger being aroused from the first. Mr. Lewis knew his man, knew he would not listen long, would not dally with things not worth the while.

The stranger finally stopped eating, involuntarily pushed back his plate, folded his arms upon the edge of the table, leaned a little forward. Mr. Lewis completely ignoring the act, he was too interested in his food (he made intimation) to notice others. The story continued in the purest English; in clean cut, concise, well rounded sentences. Descriptive and definitive adjectives were chosen to describe perfectly, to fit completely into the most comprehensive history of a man's life; until, a little boy was lost, has never been heard of; notwithstanding the searching for, and the years of advertising.

The mental agony, which had become almost an inseparable night-mare to the father, was graphically pictured.

Mr. Lewis was now sure of his hold upon his man. He concluded he had better get him out and to a less public place, to his room. He stopped short in his narrative at a most interesting time (just as he was ready to call the names of his characters) and suggested, "We had better vacate, this place seems to be getting crowded and I see you are about through eating."

"Yes, oh, yes, but you weren't through with your story . . ." with rising inflection which curious interest asks for more.

"No, oh, no. Being a true story it is quite interesting, don't you think?"

"Indeed, yes."

"Suppose we go to my room on the second floor of this building; it is quiet there and comfortable. I'll be glad to have you."

As they started for the room, Mr. Lewis continued, "You are not a newspaper reporter or an author—out looking for good material for your next book?"—he smiled quizzingly.

The stranger had sized up his man, too. He knew human nature very well, thanks to his early training as a tramp, a bootblack, law student and his inveterate wanderings of the past months.

Being interested in the man's personality and commanding good looks, (though a small man) as well as extremely interested in the story he was telling, he readily complied with the auto suggestion. "It makes little or no difference what happens to me anyway" and shaking his head he smilingly replied.

"Not guilty. But your story would make interesting reading, all right."

"Go in, make yourself comfortable," as Mr. Lewis unlocked and threw wide the door. "Here boy, bring a pitcher of ice water and two glasses at once."

The story was finally concluded, his half of it. Not a descriptive word but that had been carefully selected, and used with such skill as to portray most wonderfully the scenes, the acts, the tragedies unfolded. Such a straight unbroken account, one would have thought that a book of strange, fascinating fiction was being read.

Then the bomb exploded. Leaning suddenly forward, looking searchingly into the stranger's face, Mr. Lewis asked: "Am I not telling this story to the son of the father I have just described, who has suffered so long? Is not this Daniel Benson Foster, Jr., notwithstanding you introduced yourself as one Retsof?—a most foreign sounding pseudonym?" He paused for reply. There was none.

As Mr. Lewis expected, there were no interruptions, no demonstrations on the part of Daniel when the questions were put. His expressions changed but little as he sat in side-like posture, with legs crossed, the right elbow resting upon a table, his cheek resting upon the palm of his hand; his left arm and hand resting easily upon the

arm of his chair. His eyes only expressed his feelings though to the end, as he looked straight into his companion's face. There was nothing to hide, nothing to even camouflage.

Mr. Lewis knew Daniel was passing from death unto life (as it were), he knew every symptom (though this was the greatest, the most exaggerated, most typical case ever under his observation) and as he watched him he knew the reaction was not a healthy one. With his trained eye he saw the color come and go in lips tightening; his frame quiver as from excessive passionate anger, —which to the untrained eye would have passed unnoticed. There was some impediment in the way, some tragedy, even greater than being a lost child, boy, man—the lost son of a very prominent, very wealthy Virginian. Something had engulfed this man, and, by the hard lines which now held his mouth, the pucker between the eyes, the slowly clinching of the fists until they ached and then gradually relaxing again, Mr. Lewis was almost sure he knew the cause of the trouble. As he drew up his chair, he leaned nearer, placed a hand upon Daniel's knee and his voice grew gentle, almost a caress, as he said:

"I am Ben Lewis, a detective. I have been in your father's employ twenty years searching for you, ever since and before all advertising, all other efforts had failed."

Another pause as he looked compassionately upon his companion. Daniel, not in the slightest, took notice of the self-introduction. He already knew, not the name, but the man. No recognition as to the identity of Mr. Ben Lewis was at all necessary, so far as Daniel and Mr. Ben Lewis himself were concerned, everything was just as it should be in that particular.

B. D. Retsof had been slowly losing *his* identity, ever since the story was first begun. He was now a creature of the past, only a memory. Daniel Benson Foster, Jr., was being born into the world of his legitimate birth-right; was coming into his own after all these years of uncertainty. The travail, though indescribably strange,

wonderful, not to be understood by mere man—unfathomably, was painfully sweet;—. Why should Jo Byrne assert herself, stand before him in all her sweet, fresh, glorious, irresistible loveliness,—tormenting him almost beyond endurance? Why, oh, why wouldn't the apparition down? Why wouldn't she let his transition be pleasure, happiness; instead of pain, anguish! The thought of her prodded him with dull, heavy ache, almost to distraction.

Daniel turned slowly, sat straight in his chair, his head slightly drooped, both arms on the arms of the chair, his legs crossed. He closed his eyes in an effort to hide his agitation; in an effort to calm his raging brain, his turbulent heart. Slowly, almost with a drawl, but with as much assurance as Mr. Lewis, yea more for he *knew* . . .

"Mr. Lewis, I too, have a story to tell. I can not tell it as interestingly, as smoothly, as connectedly, possibly as you have told yours, but it is just as strange, just as true. I believe I can supply every missing link, or better, tell the other half of your story, which will certainly fit in exactly with everything you have said. Believe me, it will make a complete whole. But I am growing so overwrought or excited I can scarcely articulate and before I get inarticulate I must ask about my father—is he in this city? Where is he?"

"He is at his home, Newport News, Virginia."

"Newport News, Virginia," Daniel repeated as if in deep thought to himself.

"Mr. Lewis, I believe, yea, I *know*, I am the son of the father you have shown me by your extraordinary talent at word painting and I am leaving for Newport News the first train out.

"Can you imagine my feelings? Could anything on earth be more wonderfully strange? Did I say all life is a tragedy . . . ? Newport News, Virginia! My God, I thank Thee the mystery, the uncertainty of mine is ended." Getting to his feet, his arms raised at full length

above his head, his nervous, overwrought body shook the whole room.

"I feel for you, Dan, you have my deepest, most sincere sympathies and congratulations as paradoxical as that sounds. I can not know, of course, but I can imagine how you feel and I do most earnestly offer you my services. Sit down, drink this, you will feel better."

Daniel obeyed as promptly as confidently as a child—he sat down and thirstily drank the drops poured into the glass of water, as Mr. Lewis continued talking, "I can assure you I have never done a piece of work of which I have such just cause to be proud, happy—to rejoice in such a glorious climax.

"I know the schedule of every train leaving here going east,—here is a time table. Next train leaves at 3:45, it is now two. As it will probably take sometime to get our belongings together, and we have only one hour and forty-five minutes, I suggest that I go with you to get your luggage. We can get mine as we come back on our way to the depot. But first I must wire your father we are leaving, not mentioning route—he would be on the road in a minute and miss us. His best place is home. The best, most logical place for you to meet him is in your own home. I would not let him know, until we reached our last stop before reaching Newport News had I not sworn to do so. He would never forgive me, if I waited one moment longer than absolutely necessary.

"And, too, the shock may prove too much for him as he has been quite sick. The knowledge that you have been found, though he confidently expected it, notwithstanding the many futile trips and efforts made, might so overwhelm him with joy, I fear for his heart. I expect I had better 'phone or wire his intimate friend and neighbor, F. M. Warren, so he can go in person and tell him. It will be almost as quick and direct and lots safer than to wire him, don't you think?" Daniel raised his head—it had been bowed upon his hands since taking the drops and languidly said:

"Use your own judgment, Mr. Lewis. I am totally incapable of advising."

"Where is your baggage?"

"On this same floor, room 92, wing to left. It amounts to but little. My only business obligation is to notify my employer that I resign the work I had just accepted when I encountered the bully and newsy. I can do that by 'phone. I have no further business, no social affiliations. I can be ready to leave the city in thirty minutes."

"So can I."

"I will get my luggage together while you get yours, unless I can get yours for you while you send your message."

"I keep my belongings, what few I have — packed ready to go anywhere on a moment's notice. The wire is already worded in my brain, has been for sometime, so you go ahead and meet me here in thirty minutes."

The telegram was sent. Mr. Lewis did not wait for a reply—he dared not. "Had I waited until this juncture to have worded this message, I do not believe I could have, so that anyone could have deciphered it intelligently enough to have known what I was talking about; I have never been so affected."

Mr. Lewis could not analyze the force, the power, the supernatural something which had made the Foster, Sr., so sure of the place, so sure of the find. There was something uncanny about the whole procedure he could not understand. He was baffled beyond any reasonable solution of the mystery, for it was nothing short of a miracle.

CHAPTER XXIV

While the train was winding its cautious way eastward, the two men were in earnest conversation.

"Tell me, Daniel, tell me your story. I really never have been as mystified, never been as impatient to have a mystery cleared up."

Daniel wheeled his chair around so as to face Mr.

Lewis, sitting with feet straight in front he stretched his slender frame to its capacity, with hands clasped behind his head, and after a long minute began in easy converse:

"Of course you know, Mr. Lewis, I remember nothing of Newport News, nothing of my mother and father; the ride on the train; the catastrophe which caused such disastrous, such unbelievable melancholy, fatal histories. There has always been a hazy, half fact, half fancy, dream-like realm in my brain which I have never before been able to classify satisfactorily—sort of half mystery, half belief feeling a very young child has when some one reads or tells Aladdin or The Wonderful Lamp to them. I have some vague idea of a big, black negro woman having me,—was there a nurse with us on the train?"

"Yes, but she was a small, light brown woman. She was killed, they found her body near your mother's."

"Well, there is a black, fat negress mixed up with my very early history somewhere. But my first real awakening was when I was about four and a half years old. There was an old lady whom we called 'Granny.' I can hear her now saying: 'Jim, I think we had better take this child back to the orphans' asylum, for his parents might come for him yet, I really think it wrong to take him so far away.' I seem faintly to recall they were moving to Montana or somewhere far West. I was taken to the orphans' home where I remember I cried after 'Granny and Jim' left me. I remember but little that occurred while I was there, but I do recollect, vividly, the feeling of lack of freedom, the loss of the personal love and attention 'Granny' had given me with her grandchildren. I think of her as a kindly old soul, with soft brown eyes, a sweet face framed with snowy hair. I believe I would know her from a thousand were I to see her today. I recollect very distinctly how she marveled at the way I could talk; how well I pronounced my words and how well versed in knowing my name and age. I have heard her say lots of times—'why don't you children learn to say your name as completely and as distinctly as

Daniel Foster does?" I remember her saying that *that* was one reason that made her insist upon 'Jim' letting her keep 'the little fellow because he talked so distinctly, so politely, so sweetly.' I guess I must have been lonesome for Granny and Jim—(I had nor have I any idea who they were other than Granny and Jim) that made me become dissatisfied at the asylum. At any rate when I was about seven I ran away."

As the almost mystical, puzzle was being raveled, the worldly, strong man who had been involved in so much; so many hard, sad, blood-curdling escapades—enough to be calloused to any and all tender feelings or sympathies, wiped the tears from his eyes more than once as he saw the little beggarly waif plodding along the lonely road in the late afternoon, the sun almost gone, with all his earthly belongings wrapped up and tied in the tiny blouse and tucked under his arm; — what weird, strange thoughts must have filled the little fellow's brain. Without parents, without relatives, friends, acquaintances; no home, nowhere to go, nowhere to sleep, nothing to eat.

Very vividly, very graphically was the picture presented.

What strangeness, what lonesomeness, what terror, what fearful apprehensions must have filled the little chaps heart and brain, when the "shades of night" had fallen and he dragged his little tired, hungry body under a woman's front doorstep, having selected that place for the sole reason the woman's face wore a kindly smile as she closed and locked her front door. He felt she was not locking him out, but in, for the child-like trust and instinct told him unmistakably by the expression on her face, that she would not harm him or let others harm him if she knew why he was there.

Mr. Lewis' heart warmed toward Robert Bishop, the little waif's sympathizer and defender. He lived in the haven of the permanent shelter and protection with the little newsboys and their tired, overworked mother and friend. Lived with them in their little boxed-up "lean-to." Sat at the small, pine table and ate the frugal fare.

("I will look them up when next I am in that section of country" he stored away in his subconscious mind).

His heart swelled with gratitude and appreciation as he realized there were great, honest-to-goodness, good human men in the world who could and did see, know and appreciate real worth though covered with rags—shrunk with poverty and privations; and big and wise enough to give them a chance. ("I will look the Judge and his wife up, too,"—he again subconsciously stored away).

When the tragic episode of Daniel's innermost heart was reached, when the holiest of holies had to be dragged out again; to bear his heart to another man; hard, bitter lines formed about his mouth— (the peculiar curl of his lips that had made him so attractive in childhood and youth was almost entirely obliterated — hard straight lines, having taken their place—save at times)—his eyes fired, his face paled. Daniel hesitated, finally stopped. But the narrative *must* go on.

Mr. Lewis noticed the hesitating, noticed the cold, metallic, hard ring gaining ascendancy in his voice—and thought of the unhealthy reaction and evidenced the cause. He began searching his mind for a way to help Daniel along with the narrative without any more embarrassment than was absolutely necessary. He probed, and probed, but to no avail. Finally:

"It makes no difference to me what you did that caused you to change your name,—don't let that bother you one moment. No one need ever know. Besides any man, any set of men, would pardon, would exonerate you for doing anything in the light of what you have revealed. You have certainly been steadfast and true-blue up to now, and let me say just here, that I know it was nothing wrong, nothing to be ashamed of on your part; nothing mean, dishonorable or cowardly."

The word "coward" struck home. Daniel winced as if annoyed by some sudden, sharp pain. He smiled a sickly smile saying: "Well, I don't know. Sometimes

I have been persuaded that I was just that, that I *am* a despicable coward. The same reason that man has given since the beginning of time—since Adam blamed Eve for his fall, I give. A woman . . . ”

“I thought so . . . ”

“Do not for one moment infer from what I said that she was not all that a woman should be or could be,” quickly interrupted Daniel. “Remember, Mr. Lewis, this is grave yard . . . ,” he paused. “I loved her with all the passion of my soul, with every atom of my fresh, ardent young manhood. I worshipped while I loved her. I never dreamed that I did not have the right to love her. I knew I was a man. I had endeavored, with my every faculty, aided by every good book, by experience and observation, to be a man in the truest, fullest, cleanest sense. I had a most wonderful example of a perfect man walk daily before me in the personage of Judge Alston Farris.

“She loved me. We were engaged. One night she was informed in my presence, by a town gossip, carrion-crow of society, that I was an unknown tramp, did not know whether my name was Brown, White, Smith or Jones. She pictured our children as being taunted by my illegitimacy and so on, ad infinitum.

“I could have denied I had been a tramp but for twenty-four or forty-eight hours, and that when a child of six or seven years; but I could not deny I did not know my father and mother, nor from whence I came. I think all would have been well even then, but my—my—affianced bride shivered at my touch. I could not endure that. I could not make her suffer more; so I left that night with only a short note asking that she forgive me for loving her—allowing her to love me, though I was entirely innocent of the fact that I had no right to love her; no right to her heart, her hand, not even her acquaintance. I changed my name simply by spelling my sir name back-

ward and swapping places with my initials." He took a memorandum from his pocket and wrote B. D. Retsof—D. B. Foster, "See?—So you understand I am no imposter.—Since that night I have been a rover." Daniel closed his eyes, leaned far back in his chair.

Mr. Lewis took the leaflet, glanced at the names, the handwriting. Taking a card from his pocket signed by the elder Foster, he compared them, placed them upon Daniel's knee—"See any resemblances?"

"Yes, some. An expert in chirography would see much resemblance." Daniel merely glanced at the cards again, then closed his eyes. "I have gone from place to place; I have been to practically every country on the globe trying to decide whether I am the most dastardly, cowardly devil on earth, or whether I did the only honorable thing I could have done under the circumstances. I am still undecided." Again the hard lines around the mouth, the deep furrow between the eyes.

There was silence. The only sound heard above the trumming by Mr. Lewis with the two cards on the arm of the seat, was the continuous, monotonous, low purring sound of the fast moving cars.

"Daniel, I don't think you were a coward. I think your fine, sensitive nature, your ideas and ideals as to what a man should be to the woman he loves well enough to ask her to be his wife, to be the mother of his children, simply outweighed any selfish feeling, any selfish desire on your part. You pitted her future happiness, against the happiness of the quickly passing present; against the possible complications brought about by possible, very probable off-spring, by the venomous tongues of slanderous gossip. I think you have shown yourself an extremely brave, upright man; one that any woman would exonerate, yea, appreciate, have higher respect, greater love for, knowing conditions, and I am doubly glad for you, now that your name is clear and you can reinstate yourself in the love and life of your sweetheart."

Daniel could not make reply for some time. With eyes still closed, in low unnatural voice: "Thank you, Mr. Lewis, for your candor, for your intended kindness, but such happiness can never be mine. I was made to understand she married in less than a year after I left her." His jaws set as an intolerable pain gripped his heart—Daniel turned his face toward the window. Mr. Lewis began again the tapping of the cards on the arm of the seat, his eyes taking on a dreamy, far-off look.

"The last call for supper, Daniel, let us go," quietly broke the silence of a half hour.

"Thank you, Mr. Lewis, I couldn't eat. Go ahead, order your dinner, I'll join you presently for a cup of hot coffee or milk," without changing his position.

As Mr. Lewis passed out, Daniel bowed his face upon his hands, grasped his hair with maniacal mien, as he prayed, "My God, my God, do not forsake me, *now* I need your strong arm more than ever."

Mr. Lewis had about finished his dinner when Daniel appeared looking ten years older than when he had seen him turn on his heels and briskly walk away from the little newsboy he had so unceremoniously protected. His gait, his every feature reflected the gnawing at his heart. He slightly shook and raised his body, then sat opposite his friend and slowly drank two glasses of hot milk as he talked of trivial things the while,—recklessly, hopelessly.

They went to their berths, retired for the night. Mr. Lewis to sleep soundly—Daniel to toss and roll. "What's the use, what's the use," he reiterated again and again. "My victory is swallowed up in worse than death. When I see my father's face, grasp his hand, feel the pressure of his hands upon my head; know that I am really his, he mine—the first and only human on earth I have ever had a right to; then see my mother's picture, learn the sweet memories I am sure my father has kept fresh, blooming in his heart for his own comfort and to pass on to his son, I hope God will see fit to end my life,—

I know I am a coward for I do not believe, I know I cannot carry on further."

He was frantic, wild. He got up, raised his shade and peered into the outer darkness of the night too miserable, too distraught to even try to sleep.

His bloodless face, dark circled eyes told of hours of weary waiting.

Mr. Lewis talked of the weather; calculated the rate of speed they were then traveling; talked of the stock market—the rise in cotton yesterday, the fall last week;—speculated on wheat,—present prices; the causes and results of the unstable market prices on all commodities. He made guesses as to what would be the next great invention for the betterment of mankind. Expatiated at some length and with strong expletives on the presidential timber. What would be the next great discovery in the science of medicine and surgery. He made very extreme assertions on some of the topics, in order to raise enough interest, or antagonism in his companion for a mild debate,—but he elicited only a nod, a whimsical smile, an occasional "Yes," "No," "I think so," from Daniel.

"This milk toast is excellent, Daniel, and piping hot, have some . . ."

"Just a small slice, please. This cup of hot coffee, the dry buttered toast with this baked apple will be enough, thank you."

The time dragged wearily, lengthily on . . .

"I think we are to have a few minutes wait at this next stop, possibly twenty minutes. The last one before reaching Newport. We will have time aplenty for a brisk walk uptown. I would like to speak with an old friend I haven't seen in several years." Mr. Lewis got to his feet. "Just keep your seat, I will get our hats and overcoats."

Mr. Lewis took a note he had written the night before from his pocket, transferred it to an outside pocket of his top coat, pulled the flap over it, reached the door as

the train was beginning to stop. He helped Daniel on with his coat, both men put on their hats and started in half run—Daniel grateful for the change, the fresh air and sunshine.

They found the old man in. As Daniel turned to retrace his steps, Mr. Lewis placed the note with full instructions in his friend's hand and hurried off.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The train began creeping through the suburbs of Newport News. Daniel looked out the window. "Nearing the city of my birth." The train stopped. Daniel stepped upon the platform. As he was carried on with the crowd, he glanced backward at the train and the coach. "This is the depot my father comes to when he boards a train from home. The same building, no doubt, I passed through with father, mother and nurse nearly twenty-four years ago or was it twenty-four years?" As they passed on, Daniel glanced backward. He looked upon the crowds passing in and out. His father's friends, some of them—which ones? Some of the older ones had known him as a tiny boy—which ones? He stood gazing abstractedly around as Mr. Lewis was giving hurried instruction to the taxi driver whom he seemed to know quite well.

Mr. Lewis seemed to be in a great hurry. He said to Daniel. "Follow me," in tone to be obeyed as they left the train, and rushed on merely raising his hand and smiling to those who spoke; it seemed to Daniel that every one spoke.

As Mr. Lewis caught his arm, handed him in, the taxi promptly moved away, then Daniel was conscious of people beginning to stare, the first they knew he was with Mr. Lewis.

As they approached the home—Daniel forgot for a few brief moments his sorrows. (Mr. Lewis had tipped the driver off, giving Daniel time to do exactly as he was

doing.) As the taxi came to a full stop before the house, which sat far back, with hedges of well kept shrubbery, Daniel peered out and remained seated, thinking, seemingly, unconsciously aloud (Mr. Lewis did not move, nor did he make a reply). "Can this really be my home, my father's, my mother's home? Was I born here? Is it possible? Was it on these grounds under these trees my mother taught me to walk twenty-five years ago; taught me to talk so plainly that in that way—in that way only, I was able to retain my identity, the proud Foster patronymic?" Then as to himself, "If ever I have children that is certainly the first lesson they shall learn; to pronounce their full names perfectly, so there will be no possible chance for mistake" He turned, looked questioningly at Mr. Lewis (the chauffeur had sat as a statue looking neither to right nor left). Mr. Lewis put his hand heavily upon Daniel's knee, got up and out. Daniel followed.

A mighty switch had been released flooding the city with light, but the home they were entering was ablaze from every window, though shades were closely drawn. Mr. Foster had ordered his car to be brought two hours later, but hearing the chug of an engine, the car stop in front of his door, he got up and looked out. He had been anxiously, restlessly, impatiently, rejoicingly waiting, since the telegram had been delivered to him more than four days ago, he was beside himself with indescribable joy,—joy that was almost pain. He did not know whether the error in time of their arrival was made by mistake or intentional on Mr. Lewis' part,—he did not stop to decipher; "that is my boy, my son; that is Daniel Foster, Jr.," as he gazed out upon the approaching figures; then dropped the curtain and almost groped his way across the room and to the door.

The front door swung wide on its hinges and "My boy, my son, my son!" softly, gently, caressingly spoken was the only audible sound for some moments as the two stood locked in each others arms. Tears were flowing

down Mr. Lewis' cheeks in true sympathy for the joy, the satisfaction of soul, being experienced by father and son.

"Come in Lewis and close the door."

"No, I am through for the day and night—I 'phoned my wife I would be with her at home at six and I will have to hurry if I make it—she will be waiting. Good-night," and he was gone, leaving father and son alone.

Mr. Foster knew the early arrival was intended.

"Stand there, son. Now turn round slowly so I can get every ear mark. My beautiful boy! My handsome son! Beautiful, because your mother called you that; now I say handsome, because you are a man. Can it be possible after all these years of heart hunger, fear, anxiety and every other discomfort and distraction possible for a man to experience in like fate; is it possible, is it a fact, I am at last permitted to hold you in my arms, look into your face, hear your voice, hear you call me Father once again? How sweetly you used to say, 'Farver,' and 'Muvver,' when you first learned to talk. How your mother would snatch you to her heart and kiss you every time you said it. You seemed to enjoy it for you said it so often that before you were two years old you pronounced your name and Mother and Father as distinctly as she or I."

"How infinitely grateful and thankful I am, my Father, nothing else matters now!" and again tears of absolute thanks coursed down the father's face. So appealing was he that Daniel threw himself upon his knees at his father's feet, his arms across his body, hid his face upon his breast, heart to heart as he had when a baby of three.

Dinner had been ordered served at eight o'clock. When it was ready neither man paid attention to the announcement.

"Just clear the table, Henry, neither of us wish anything except a cup of hot coffee and cheese toastie, bring them here, I want you and the others to see my son anyway," called Mr. Foster when Henry finally caught his attention.

The services of the best chef in the city had been engaged to make this a feast of good things and good cheer for the son "who was lost and is found" (not prodigal). And again unlike the wandering son of Biblical lore, no friends for merry making and promiscuous excessive rejoicing had been invited. The elder Foster wanted his long lost son alone and in the quiet of his baby-hood home where he felt the mother love still hovering over "my beautiful boy." It would have been desecration, sacrilege, to have had it otherwise.

Henry conveyed the spirit of the hour to the others of the household. The coffee and toasties were served in quiet dignity. In pronounced respect for the master they had served, so long and so well, each payed his respects to the master's son, only one of which had known him as a baby—"Aunt Mandy" who still held undisputed sway in the kitchen. She put her arms around Daniel, bowed her grey head, kissed his hand, made a deep courtesy and wiping her eyes with the corner of her apron followed the last one out, closing the door softly as she went out . . . "Aunt Mandy" had grown old, thin, and wrinkled in the service of the Fosters.

"You must sleep in the room with me for a while, Daniel, I have had two beds put in. I cannot let you out of my sight for a long while yet.

"Son, you are the living image of your angel mother. Made in as perfect masculine mold as she was a perfect woman. You have her starry brown eyes, her long curling lashes. Your mouth is larger, but with the exact irresistible twinkle, I called it—the exact expression. The same shaped face. She had the most adorable nose and I used to kiss her on it, right here, almost as often as I did her mouth. Yours is an exact facsimile, only larger, of course. Oh, son, I am so glad you are like her, like your mother,—would she were with us tonight."

The first paroxysms of joy having spent themselves, father and son made ready for bed. After which they slipped on their pullman robes and slippers, freshened

up the fire, switched off the lights, lighted cigars and made themselves comfortable in large winged chairs.

"How very selfish I have been, son, I have not let you talk much, I have been looking, looking; wondering, wondering; talking, talking, not giving you the ghost of a chance. It doesn't matter whether we go to bed 'till morning, we can sleep all tomorrow and night and right on until we naturally awake. I will write a bulletin, put it on the outer door so Henry will know not to disturb us. I have already given orders, but this will clinch them."

The bulletin was written and tacked to the outer door.

"Now tell me everything, *everything*, son."

As Daniel talked it seemed to the father that he had the nicest, most pleasing, most resonant voice he ever heard, like deep distant thunder mingled with silvery rain drops. "I wonder if he sings, if he is especially fond of music and song,—his mother loved them so," he reflected.

"How I got to Tennessee, so far away will ever be a mystery, I guess. Of one thing I am convinced, every child should be taught his full address,—the city and state of his birth—together with his *full* name." (Daniel seemed obsessed with that thought—what it would have meant to him, and to so many others had *he* only known). "My first tangible impressions awoke when I was in the home of a kindly old lady we called 'Granny' and her son 'Jim'—I guess he was her son. There were several other children, one smaller, two larger than I,—Jim's I reckon."

Then followed a full account of all memories there. Then the years at the orphan's home; of his running away, "looking for Granny and Jim I guess," he smiled. ("Simply looking, starving, dying for love,"—the father knew as he brushed a tear from his eyes, tears that would come in spite of himself—"for he loved his mother and grandmothers devotedly, he was such a loving, such an affectionate baby").

Then of the bully beating him for a trivial, nothing,—for merely bumping into him accidentally—slightly, but

enough to cause him to drop the piece of candy he was eating—another boy as accidentally stepped on the candy mashing it flat and otherwise making it unfit for use.

Of Robert's interference and protection; of the names Lean and Lank being bestowed upon them by the crowd which they always clung to in private for sentiment—for pure love and regard each had for the other. Of his home with Robert and his mother.

As he told of the home; of their mode of living, the washing and ironing and eating; of their scant supply of clothes; how they saved and pooled their money for school necessities; of attending night school,—the father became too overcome for Daniel to continue for some moments, but not a word did he utter.

As he told of the meeting with Judge Farris; the thousand dollars left by the kind, eccentric old man; of Lank's misfortunes; the unstolen twenty dollar bill and his unfortunate injuries on the eve of his first job when the wolf was howling so loudly at their door. Again the elder man was touched too deeply for Daniel to be heard.

He told of Uncle Robert's timely and wonderful offer; of Mrs. Bishop's acceptance of the offer; of their last meal together in their humble home; how peculiarly they felt, sadness and gloom mixed with gladness and delight; of his desperate lonely feelings he had of not having a home; though the uncle had graciously included him in his beneficence.

Then of the proffered home with Judge Farris and his wife and under what conditions it was accepted. The magnificent, the homey home and the happy, profitable years lived there. What a mother, father—friends, benefactors they had been to him; of his college and University days; his ambitions. A peculiar smile of mingled pleasure and I-thought-as-much expression passed over the father's face—he actually smiled out loud—as Daniel told of his and Robert's wishes and desires about the war and of Robert's service. He told of his business career (but of his unusual and phenomenal rise to prominence in the affairs of the world he did not speak). Daniel

talked on and on, he felt strangely at ease, peculiarly comfortable and at rest. "*His father,*" "*his home*" would flit involuntarily through his mind as his eyes would catch a vision of some new object, he hadn't noticed before.

The father was delighted, tense with pride, joy, love and satisfaction. He could see the tender sympathy, the fair dealings, the untiring zeal and ambition of the mother, shed abroad in the life of her son. He sat with his hands clasped behind his head, his eyes on the fire when not on his boy's face, fervently listening.

Then Daniel's mien changed.

He must go on with the narrative. He had tried to leave Jo out entirely, the part she had played in his life. He didn't see how he could drag out his soul again, even for his father to behold, yet he could not honorably finish until,—why he had changed his name, why the insatiate wanderings, had been explained. His eyes fell, and only the exceeding quiet of the room made it possible for the father's eager ears to catch every word.

Daniel did not waver when once begun. He told the cause, the reasons why he left Jo and the manner of leaving. He left nothing, where she was concerned, to be guessed. Then in slightly louder, in vibrant voice—"and father as gloriously heavenly as knowing and being with you; of learning the sweet, precious memories and seeing the pictures of my beautiful mother; of living in this, my almost palatial home. I had rather have gone on, finished my course as a nameless waif, the unknown wanderer B. D. Retsof, than to have to endure this unutterable longing, enhanced a thousand fold by this . . . " He leaned his forehead upon his clenched fists as they rested upon his knees.

The father's eyes flashed. Springing to his feet, every bone, muscle, sinew, grew stiff, rigid. He was beside himself, unable to control his angry passion. Biting his lips he almost hissed in cold, angered voice, through closely clamped teeth. "Hell is too good for some characters. The tongue has caused more utter ruin and damna-

tion to individuals and nations than all other causes on earth combined." His excessive anger convulsed his whole being, and for a long minute completely overcame his habitual conservative demeanor. He as suddenly reined himself up taut and after a few brief minutes was exceedingly quiet.

Placing his hands gently upon his son's bowed head; who had not looked up had not moved during his father's furious outburst, continued in mellow, well modulated voice, "But it is all over now, my son, thank God, all uncertainties are at an end. I will go to her with you at once, so she,—so no one can have further doubt or fear as to your patrimony—beyond all possible doubt, establish your identity."

"She is another man's wife—there is no possible hope."

"Married, my son! How long?" again he bit his lips.

"She married in less than a year after I left her," bitterly spake Daniel, without raising his eyes.

"Another's wife and so soon? My son, I fear she did not love you as a woman should the man she marries, as I wish the woman to love whom my son weds. That being true, no doubt you will have ample, just cause to rejoice that you lost her."

Daniel clenched his fists, raised a flushed face, got to his feet, flashing his eyes to his father's, "She *did* love me. I cannot let even you destroy that little spark of heaven left within me. I *know* she loved me as inexpressibly as I loved her, but she thought I did not love her. She thought I had deceived, had lied to her, and she tried to hate me, tried to find solace, comfort and love in the arms of another. Not the best way, I grant you, but she was miserable, disappointed and it caught her on the rebound. If it had to be as it is, I hope she is happy, though the thought that some other man brings her happiness is the maddening, the bitter—the *bitter* thing in my life." His head dropped forward. As he sat down his body grew as motionless as if life were truly extinct. For a long while only the passing automobile, the tick-tock of the large, floor, grand-father's clock were heard.

"My, son, I love you, I am exceedingly proud of you. Do not let your first night at home, after an absence of twenty-three years, be filled with gloom; clouded with unpleasant forebodings; tinged with bitterness. Try to believe, try to think that everything will work out for your good, for the good of all. I believe that it will. Some day we will all be able to understand."

After another long silence the father continued: "I wired the happy news of your home-coming to your grandparents and others, they were overcome with joy. Grandmother had to have the doctor and be put to bed. The old folks are too feeble to travel alone, so we are to go to them as soon as practicable. It was to them, to their home we were going when the awful tragedy happened which caused me to lose your mother, your baby sister and you.

"The families on both sides have given me credit, I think, for being somewhat demented,—my clinging to the idea that I would some day find you. *They* knew it was as impossible as *I knew* it was possible and *felt* highly probable. That phase of the dementia will be released, I judge, ha, ha," and a satisfied, contented, happy smile illuminated his countenance,—then the features grew passive.

Then for the first time, Daniel learned of his mother's condition when she was hurled into eternity.

Turning toward his father, putting his hand comfortingly upon his arm he said, with more feeling than he had ever yet expressed, "You, too, have suffered," and bowed his face upon his hands.

"Yes, I have suffered, only the Allwise knows how much"

"But you endure valiantly, like a brave man, I, like a fool"

"Do not upbraid yourself so harshly, so bitterly. I tasted my joy. I held my wife, the mother of my babies in my arms, I kissed and fondled my baby boy. *Providence* saw fit to make my happiness short lived; you had the cup of joy snatched from your hands while in the act of

drinking, by the malicious tongue of slander, by unfair, unkind, unscrupulous cruel *human* agencies, which engender remorse, stir up strife, force a desire for vengeance, a hellish longing to take them by the throat and hold them fast 'till dead. Simply a case of Providence against human, the one to accept in anguished, reconciled sadness, the other unreconciled, maddening anger, an almost unconquerable desire for revenge." Another long pause.

"Daniel, my son, you are far spent, go to bed and to sleep. When we waken on the morrow be it early or late—may we be able to cast all bitterness, all sorrow and pain behind us—cling only to sweet memories and each other. Face the future with hope resolving to start life anew, and by the help and love for each other and God, round out useful, well spent lives. You—we both have wonderful opportunities for much good work. You especially, my son, are young and strong, both in mind and body—life is only beginning, my boy. Only twenty-seven tomorrow, too soon to give up, entirely too soon to lose hope."

"Father, I left her broken, of course, but I worked,—I worked hard at any and every job that presented itself, it made no difference what kind of work. The memory of her was sweet, was precious to my soul. I simply had to let some form of hard manual labor help me bear the pain. So, as I said, I worked, worked like the devil—you can imagine. I have often laughed wild, hellish laughs at what my former friends and associates would have said, could they have seen the 'most promising young financier in the state,' 'doing his daily dozen.' I had to do it to live. But when Bob's letter failed to come! The first week I did fairly well, I thought possibly the letter was missent or delayed; but when I stayed in that place longer than any since leaving Brazil and still no letter—the first of another month came, passed and still not a letter—all hope died, ambition with it. I almost lost my belief in an all wise, a just God. I cared for nothing—what was there in life for me, anyway? At such

times I drank myself into oblivion. I laughed at any and every man who even seemed to think a woman loved him; I knew if Jo could forget me that quick, give her lips and arms, her entire self to another, forget so entirely what she had been and meant to me, that they were all cheats, all false, all liars and deceivers. I had often wondered before how any sane man could act as some did about a woman, but pshaw! I did not, do not blame them one whit for anything they do, even to murder and suicide."

Not another word was spoken aloud that night. Both men sat dreaming some minutes, then in one accord slipped off their robes and slippers, went to bed and to sleep. Daniel turning his face down on the pillow saying softly, unheard. "To sleep on my own bed, in my own home; and such a bed, such a home, such a father! God, forgive all the hard, ugly bitter feelings and thoughts my disappointment has wrung from me and help me to awake on the morrow ready and able to do and to dare."

The father turning his face away, in prayerful attitude said softly, unheard, "I hope he will sleep until afternoon, then maybe he will be stronger and better when he wakes. I hope so, oh, I hope so. Poor boy, my son! How much he had to suffer when so young; hunger, cold, heat, wet,—in poverty and rags. My son a waif, a shoe-black—a dependent! My son, my son!

"Now disappointed in love. I do so regret that. Such an awful blow for a man to think he has misunderstood and been misunderstood by the woman he loved, respected, revered as he did his God. Disappointed in the woman he chose above all others to 'love and cherish so long as you both shall live.' He has had much, *much* to overcome, but he will be a better, stronger man for the experience."

The sun had about reached its meridian before the older man saw signs of wakefulness in his boy. Daniel, seeing his father awake, turned comfortably on his side, faced his father, drew up his knees slightly, put his arm at right angle under his head, so as to raise it and cor-

dially, cheerfully called out with some of his erstwhile levity.

"Good morning, Dad. Think of it, born again at the age of twenty-seven into my father's life and home. You can't know how really refreshing and exhilarating the sensation! Very like the one I used to experience when a tiny boy (every child feels, I judge) at hearing my teachers tell or read a real interesting fairy or Arabian Knights story.

"To *know* you are my father, to *know* this is my own beautiful home, the one mother shared with us. To know the exact date of my birth. I knew the month not the day—think of a man of ordinary intelligence, in this twentieth century arriving at the age of twenty-seven, a quarter of a century, plus, and not know his exact age. Some record, I say. May I be the only human ever thus trammeled, ever thus shackled!

"I hope you slept as well and feel as well as I do this morning or afternoon, which is it? Nearly twelve—well, we slept *late* alright."

The father had assumed the same comfortable posture, as his son, and grew younger each minute as he rejoiced in the good-natured repartee of his boy, which continued until breakfast was announced.

After a bath, a breakfast—exquisite in every appointment. At his plate Daniel found a handsome, hand carved watch and chain and a check for twenty-seven thousand dollars. On the attached card he read: "A thousand dollars for every year. No more joy in my heart your first birthday than on this your twenty-seventh, my dear son. God bless you," written in bold, blunt type.

His childish wish and oath to have a watch like Judge Farris' flitted through his brain. He smiled. Judge Farris' watch was handsome—his regal.

As he removed the watch he was wearing and fitted the kingly gift in his pocket and adjusted the chain a pensive smile overcast his face as he thought of his watch of quartz and bead chain,—his mascot, his luck-piece.

Then a tour of the place and exploration of every cranny and crevice of house and grounds in company with his father.

"Father is this your and mother's original home?"

"No, son, this is Grandmother and Grandfather Foster's home. I was the youngest child, the only boy. The three girls married, had homes and families of their own before I married. Father and mother being old, begged that your mother and I live with them, giving us the home as a bridal present. So we did. Your mother said she would 'love to and besides they were too old and dear to live in that big house all alone.'

"The house was made over entirely new. Every modern convenience and I might say luxury of that date were installed before your mother came as my bride.

"No couple—no two couples—were happier than we. Father and mother grew as young and gay as we and many wonderful trips, many a happy 'at home,' we spent together. Your mother was beautiful, sweet, gracious; highly cultured and accomplished. She crept into mother's and father's hearts and lives—became a component part of them. They loved her better than they did me or anyone else.

"Your advent was the greatest that had ever taken place, there had never been a baby boy born into the world before, and such a baby! Never before had such an amount of time and money been spent to make a coming as comfortable, as beautiful as possible. How happy we four were! The great event took place in this room and I wish you to have it as your very own. The smaller room there we used for a dressing room, it opens into the bath and was ideal.

"On your mother's desk there, you will find your baby book—kept carefully by her. An entry was made each day. She treasured it highly, my son; I pass it on to you the most valued possession I have of hers. In the larger book you will find a correct record from the time I lost her until now. Three entries were made each year (occasionally one in the interim): one on our wedding anni-

versary, one on your birthday, one on the anniversary of the tragedy which took her, and—and—others—away. In the small drawer, are the hat and your little glove that were found floating on the river.

"My mother lived only a few years after our marriage, (she was ill only a few days of pneumonia), dying when you were two and a half years old—how she did love you! Father died about five years ago. I am sure his anxiety, grief, worry and the uncertainty about you hastened the end, for he was of robust, hearty constitution and came of a line of long-lived ancestry. You seemed ever on his mind. The last thing he said to me before going into his last sleep was: 'Son, little Dan will come home to you some day.'

"The entire menage stayed on, his special man however, died soon after he did, the rest of us have lived on, waiting—waiting for you.

"Two years ago I had the entire place done over new, inside and out. How do you like your home son?"

"Nothing could be more ideal, more beautiful, more absolutely satisfying to my home-sick, heart-sick soul, I assure you, father. It is impossible for you, for anyone to appreciate my feelings." Daniel left his father, walked over to the window, pulled back the soft, white, silky draperies, and with his hand upon his baby book stood looking out upon the lawn appealingly soothing with its great grey trees; their bare branches, stretching skyward, a bright leaf or flower on vine or shrub here and there; an occasional bird flitting slowly as if chilled by the winds of the frosty night, or perched high upon a twig preening its feathers, shaking its stiffened body, fluffing its plumage, so the bright, warm sun rays could penetrate to the skin.

The father left the son in his own room, to meditate, to read the baby book written with his mother's own hand. As the door closed noiselessly, Daniel turned around, picked up the book, sat at his mother's desk.

Opening the book, he read the sweet, tender lines; describing his first smile, first tooth, first word, first step;

the first birthday, first toys, first Santa Claus. How his glee was expressed in laughter and the clapping of the baby hands, as grandfather and daddy held him "steady" on old Bluche's back (an immense St. Bernard). Pasted at the bottom of this page was a splendid kodak picture of the description written. Daniel looked upon himself sitting astride the dog, with father and grandfather bent over him their faces lighted with the pleasures they felt, each with a steadying hand upon his little body; the dog seeming to understand, enjoying the procedure as much as the men; the baby hands were buried in his long mane, the face turned up in laughter to his father's. As he looked, Daniel forgot for a moment, it was his own likeness. He had interpreted and imbibed the spirit of the occasion, and smiled a pleasing smile, as he too, caught the irresistible "twinkle" of the baby mouth. It was a *good* picture, a pretty picture. Another, showed him on a "scooter" his mother guiding the toy, the chubby hands grasping firmly the handle bar, the eyes cast intently upon them, one foot raised uneasily as if not so sure of his equilibrium. This was a good picture, his mother beautiful.

Then the first meal with his baby spoon; the condition of the face, hands and bib after the meal. All, everything, was fully described—not a motion, not a gurgle seemed to have escaped the argus eyes of parents and grandparents. Every day noted some special prank or cuteness.

The last item registered, quite overcame Daniel's emotions, for he knew it must have been entered a few days—probably the last day of his mother's life—the last day they were all together, the last day of the home. The picture was dated. He took out his pencil and on the back of an envelope made a calculation (he was then unable to make it without aid of pencil and paper). He was exactly two years, eleven months, twenty days old when this picture of him was made. He was all alone and in his first suit,—little black velvet trousers, white linen blouse, with Buster Brown collar and plaid tie. His hair

cut decidedly boyish (in the other pictures it had been somewhat girlish) parted on the left side and sleekly, neatly brushed from his forehead; his feet, encased in black patent leather slippers and white sox, were well apart as he stood in quite a manlike pose, with a small walking cane grasped tightly in the baby hands held horizontally across the body. Each hand showed four tiny dimples. His father had shown him the cane—(a gift from his grandfather, because he harassed the old man so for his) which he invariably carried when out for a walk. “You have always liked to carry a cane, old top, a habit still noticeable in your make up,” smilingly thought Daniel. “If pictures, — if day dreams and thoughts expressed so simply, so sweetly beautiful and literally expressive,—mean anything at all, this book means that you had a most excellent—a most superlatively excellent mother, young man, and from your appearance in every picture, I am of the opinion she had you a nobby, sprucy looking little fellow, when she was around at least. I wonder . . . ” He mused half aloud, stopping short in his thought . . . His eyes large, sad, dreamy, then drawing them to almost a line, he reflected “If Whittier never wrote any other verses, the one ending: ‘it might have been’ is sufficient to make him world known,—many times thought of. ‘It might have been’ has recurred to me ten thousand times, I venture, since I last clasped Jo’s hand. Sad—, truly sad. ‘It might have been,’ God, what might now have been!”

“Sometimes when I am stable enough to think straight, sane enough to express my thoughts in clever, lucid language, I am going to draw word pictures, paint a beautiful picture of what my life (our lives) what might have been, could have been and in all probability would have been, had not fate interfered.

Under natural, ordinary conditions and circumstances, the book would have been simply a foolish little baby book—kodaks. A keepsake for his sentimental mother. Under the unnatural, the extraordinary conditions and

circumstances, it was an exceedingly worth-while book—Priceless. Very precious. All his real life.

Daniel, with the book still open upon his lap, lay far back in his chair, eyes closed, deeply absorbed in thought, deeply touched. Long he sat, his hand lightly touching the book as if fearful of hurting it.

Bringing it to his lips he tenderly kissed it as he would have kissed the lips of his dead mother, closed it, put it carefully in its place. Then took up the larger book.

It was written in bold clear type (so different from the light easy Spencerian type of the mother). “The chirography typifies the lives lived” thought Daniel. He was king in his domain, she queen in her’s; each commanding, demanding and submitting; each conscientiously doing his best in their respective spheres.

The larger book was opened. He read the sweet, the bitter, the desperate, the disconsolate, the soul-tearing record; his father’s triad entries—on the three anniversaries: his marriage, birth of the first baby, the tragedy. How the husband, the father, had lived and kept his reason through all the years was more than Daniel could understand.

When he picked up, looked at, handled the tiny kid glove, so carefully preserved,—his glove, the one he had worn, the one his mother had put on and then taken from his hand and lain lightly upon his father’s hat, a few hours, possibly a few moments before she had been hurled into eternity; before his father had been hurled to eternal anguish of both mind and body;—he to . . . nonentity—to hell!

Daniel remained in the retreat of his room for hours, was still reading and pondering when dinner was announced. His face was enigmatic. The father did not try to decipher his son’s countenance—indeed, analysis would have been exceedingly difficult—impossible. The occasion was not mentioned by either of them for some weeks.

At dinner, to which Mr. F. M. Warren and Mr. Ben Lewis had been invited, that peerless raconteur was made master of ceremonies—and was asked to tell of his last success.

He related the experiences which led up to and after finding Daniel, along with many others he had had while making the nation-wide search for Daniel.

Some of the incidents were so ridiculously told, the house would reverberate from time to time with the hearty laughter of the men. They were “rich, rare, and racy.” (Daniel thought of the remark Mr. Lewis had made in the waiting room of the 'Frisco depot, when he had occasion to remark that all life was tragedy, of Mr. Lewis saying, “no indeed I have seen lots of comedy in my life”).

He had.

Some of the incidents were so touchingly told, the men would sober and expressions of a feeling of a desire to help, a feeling of regret and sympathetic pain would pass over their faces.

All incidents were told interestingly and well, so much so that none of the others had desire to join in—all were satisfied,—pleased, to listen.

Mr. Lewis had a very responsive, understanding nature. The ridiculous appealed to him spontaneously and no one saw more of the ridiculous, the comedy, nor enjoyed it more than he. To the same degree did the pathetic appeal to him and no one expressed more real feeling, more charity for the unfortunate; gave more material assistance to the “down and out,” than he. But for crooks, betrayers, willful trouble makers, he had absolutely no patience with, no mercy for and because of the very pronounced bi-nature of the man and to such marked degree,—he had grown rich in knowledge, rich in possessions in doing the work for which nature had best fitted him. He had gotten to the place where he could “name the price” for his services, though scarcely reached the half century mark.

Later in the evening there was an ingathering of all neighbors and friends. Scores called to clasp the hand of the father in hearty, heart-felt, rejoicing, sympathetic joy. Cordially clasped the hand of the long lost son, who had come at last to gladden the father's heart and home. All, even the youngest, knew of the tragedy in the father's life and all seemed to be personally interested in the finding of the handsome son they knew almost as tradition. The gathering was so informal, so genuinely congenial and pleasant that twelve o'clock came before good nights and best wishes began to be extended. Then some of the younger ones gathered around the piano and began singing old and familiar songs (in which Daniel would involuntarily join with his rich baritone when the piece was especially familiar or appealing to him). As the elder Foster, watched his boy and listened to him sing, his fine eyes grew moist and tender. "He *does* love music, he is indeed like his mother," he breathed.

The selections sung dove-tailed evenly with the events of the hour. The songs were as appropriate as if they had been selected and religiously rehearsed for the occasion. High paid choirs could have listened with sincere appreciation; the notes were so free from all affectation, so clear, so sweet, so heart-felt. They were used as a recessional by the older heads, for they passed on out, and to their homes, leaving the younger ones to follow promptly.

Father and son stood in the door looking on as the last one filed out into the night. Turning, they came arm and arm into the house. Daniel was beginning to feel much at home, very comfortably satisfied. They met Henry as he came to close the house for the night. As they passed on to their room, Daniel said: "The day has been full indeed—pleasant. We can at least be quietly happy, can't we?" The father pressed his arm heavily and earnestly said: "My son, may 'the cares that infest your days, fold their tents like the Arabs and as silently steal away.' "

CHAPTER XXVII

The following noon the house was closed for a fortnight, and left in charge of Henry and "Aunt Mandy." Father and son left for Charlotte, N. C., where the maternal grandparents (Mr. and Mrs. John Crawford McKinzie) and other near relatives were anxiously, nervously awaiting the coming of the much loved son-in-law, brother-in-law, and his son whom they were wonderingly desirous to see.

Each and every one had made (privately) wide and wild speculations as to what Daniel was, what he could possibly be and look like after almost twenty-four years of being a lonely, homeless, helpless orphan; . . . The older ones who knew life were very skeptical, their opinions would not register; a new roll every day, every hour—every minute, now as time drew near for his arrival, and they all stood tip toe on the topmost peak of polite, wondering, sympathetic, feeling curiosity.

Try as they would and did the only authentic information they had been able to get since Daniel had been found was over wire and 'phone, which was very harrassingly unsatisfactory in this case.

The father was uncommunicative; which bore the flagrant insignia of his utter, anguishing disappointment—they all thought—yea *knew*. (A good sized interesting book could have been made of the different Daniels each one visioned).

The first message sent them was merely a verbatim of the one Mr. Foster had received from Mr. Lewis in San Francisco. A second one was sent on the morning after Daniel's arrival. Merely stating of a truth Daniel Benson Foster, Jr., was at home and well. Very brief. No personal references whatever. Maddening! Then a third and last telling of their coming,—the exact time.

Henry had orders to give any information actually necessary, but that neither father nor son could answer the phone *now*. "Say we are in conference, Henry, and cannot be disturbed," was the final dictum.

The train moved swiftly along, making few stops. Daniel found his father a well-informed man; a most interesting, entertaining conversationalist, and very widely known. Not a place did they stop, not a restaurant or hotel did they enter, but some one was rushing up, "So glad to see you Dan," or "Mr. Foster," and Daniel was always proud to be introduced as "my son."

Mr. Foster knew something of historic interest or some pleasant anecdote about each town passed and almost every passenger that got on and off the train. It was certainly not tedious nor tiresome to travel with such a companion.

"Daniel, I met your mother for the first time at a house party at the little town we are now nearing, East Point. If the family had not—some died, some married, all moved away, we would have stopped over between trains to have seen them, for they were a very remarkable family in many ways.

"Gertrude Herndon ('Gertie' we called her) and your mother were chums and room-mates at college; as were her brother, Murray Herndon and I at the University of Virginia. There were five children, Murray and Gertie being the oldest.

"They lived about a mile from the station—(you can see the house after we cross the tressle, I will show you) and were what you could truly call 'livers at home.' The house was a large, rambling affair, looked as if it had been added to from time to time as occasion demanded and not from a desire to carry out any special period of architecture (laughed the father). But such comfort! Each different addition was almost a separate and distinct dwelling—apartment house you might say, ideal for large house parties. And they had them. More people have had more wholesome, genuinely good times in that home than any in the state, or several states, I expect. See, there it is, the large brick and wood building on the hill. I understand it has been sold to northern capitalists for a summer home.

"They had horses (saddle, wagon and buggy), hogs,

cattle, chickens, pigeons, peafowls, turkeys, guineas, fox-hounds, 'possum-hounds, bird dogs, house dogs, cats; the loveliest fruits of every kind that grew in that section; vegetables of all kinds, galore; wines, jellies, pickles and preserves of every kind and flavor.

"The fire places, which occupied almost the entire end of a room, were kept piled high with oak and hickory logs, brought in by the hands on the plantation, who also served as valets for the boys; each girl had a negro girl or woman for a maid. Most all the help were the children of former slaves. Your mother and I spent Thanksgiving with them the year before we were married, and such a time as we did have! There was an even dozen of the young bunch (besides neighbors). We hunted fox, o'possums and coons by night; rabbits, quail, doves and ducks by day, when we were not sitting before the fire popping corn, parching peanuts, boiling chestnuts, roasting potatoes in the ashes, or making candy.

"They had a very good piano. Most all the girls could play—some of the boys—they would take it turn about playing, while the others danced.

"Very droll duets, both vocal and instrumental, were improvised, making lots of fun; the vocal ones were the means of publicly telling in a secret way the individual news or the suspected heart throbs of the crowd," he laughed. "Utterly ridiculous some of them. The 'old folks' would join in with us or sit in a corner for a quiet chat, checkers or old-fashioned dominoes; bridge, mah-jongg and such were unknown in those parts.

"I shall never forget those visits.

"Murray married an English girl and lives in Montreal, Canada. We will go to see them some day. I have been several times. They are fine. Poor Gertrude died when her youngest child was about six years old; she left three children. I haven't heard from any of them in some time. She lived in New York."

He looked at his watch . . .

"We are just ten minutes from Charlotte. I guess they will send for us in the car; but if grandmother and

grandfather come, they will be driving two fine bays, with driver in full livery on the front seat. They still cling to their horses (too near Kentucky not to) they like them so much better than a car. They say 'Tom and Jerry' understand their language. Will 'whoa' when they say 'whoa' and 'get up' when they say 'get up,' not so with a car *always*.

"Your Aunt Carrie and Uncle Tom (Caroline and Thomas, the old folks call them)—Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Livingston, live at Greenville, S. C. We are to go by to see them, too. The other brother and sister live in Texas. I haven't seen them in years, and never hear from them except through the others.

"A widowed daughter and two children, about grown, live at the old home with the old folks,—Aunt Clara (Mrs. James Berney), James, Jr., and Bettie Jo." Daniel's breath left him as this name was pronounced—the color vanished, leaving him pale. He recovered his composure before his father noticed. "Bettie Jo is named for the two grandmothers, Elizabeth and Josephine. They are lovely children.

"Well, here we are and there are James and Bettie Jo in the car, the large brown one to the right. I guess grandfather and grandmother were unable to be out and Aunt Clara stayed with them."

Bettie Jo was a complete "knock out" as James said of her. She was a tall, slender, graceful girl; "red-headed"—James called it ("titian" she called it, and it was) eyes, the same shade of her hair (large and expressive of vim, fire, life and laughter), rosy, school-girl complexion, deep dimple in her left cheek. She was dressed in sport clothes up to the last minute in style—even to hair cut. The whole effect struck Daniel as being just the thing. She spoke to every one at once, greeted "Uncle Dan" very affectionately, also "Dan." She loved everybody and thought everybody loved her, and they did. She told all the news, in gleeful energy, at once, giving no one else a chance to tell any.

Bettie Jo talked incessantly the drive home, much to

James' outward embarrassment and concealed disgust. That "automatic, self-winding phonograph" he called her, "is indeed wound tight tonight," he thought.

Upon reaching home she was the first one out. She conducted Daniel and her uncle (holding an arm of each) up the steps and into the house. She was here, there, everywhere. Her merry, spontaneous laughter could be heard above every other sound as she jollied grandpa, petted the cat, spit out catty remarks at James, gave orders to the servants. James wished in the depths of his soul it were possible to shut her up, but not so, the worst was yet to come.

She played the piano ("jazzy" grandfather and Jim said) and the "uke". She preferred to play the orthophonic, which she usually did and danced and sang while it played. If no one danced with her, she danced alone.

Daniel learned she could out-strip any member of the family playing bridge (except Jim, which vexed her, much to his amusement) but she could beat him at "42". She played basket ball well. Went to every football and basket-ball game. If the girls didn't see that she got there, the boys did,—“as James would *not* take her, he was *always* with 'some other girl' and 'Grandpa' would not let her drive the car—‘though other girls did, and younger than she. Grandpa was entirely too straight laced as to observing the law.”

James was as totally unlike Bettie Jo as was possible for sister and brother to be. Four years her senior (he was nineteen), several inches taller, with almost black hair, dark gray eyes, olive skin. He was a quiet, dignified, thoughtful chap, with no patience with Bettie Jo's "crazy cat" ways; yet, Bettie Jo knew he adored her. He saw that she had the best, did the best, went with the best. She was never out of his sight or mind for long at a time and then he *knew* where she was,—“She is so harum-scarum I have to watch her, I never know what she is going to do next,” he told his mother when Bettie

Jo chided him for being so "prim and prissy" about her. He submitted to her teasing like a Spartan.

The mother adored "Jim."

Bettie Jo always came out ahead of everybody in most everything she did, except school. She *did* make her grade was all, but sufficient for her. James insisted on A's and A plus, and got them, even his first year at University—not so with Bettie Jo.

She was completely taken off her feet by "Dan" and whispered in his ear when he had been in the house an hour. "I have won my bet I know. Jim said you would be a nice straight-jacket like him and grandpa, but I said you were a dead game sport and you are, aren't you?" To which Daniel smilingly replied, "I expect I am."

The orthophonic was started—after she promised grandpa, grandma, Jim and mother she would play and sing everything she knew before bed time, if they would let her play three or four of her favorites first—*now*.

As she surmised, she found "Dan" an excellent dancer, "Jim dances well too," she informed Daniel, "but he wont very often with me."

Daniel found "grandfather" and "grandmother" all that grandparents could be. Though passed three score years and ten, they had lost none of their dignity, none of their polite refinement. Both heads white as snow. "Grandfather"—only medium height and rotund—"grandmother so straight, slim and sweet," Daniel said.

"They make a perfect 10," Bettie Jo whispered, "grandpa so round—grandma so straight and slim."

Aunt Clara, he found, a patient, cheerful, ideal mother and aunt; an excellent housekeeper and host; her suavity unsurpassed.

Daniel loved them all, was exceedingly proud of his mother's people thus far. It made him wonder about her, long for her. He thought he saw a striking likeness between his mother's picture and Aunt Clara; the father verified the likeness, though he said Bettie Jo was more

like her than she was like her mother, except the color of her hair,—his mother's hair was a darker, richer brown—eyes too. Daniel loved to make the comparison when Bettie Jo was unconscious of being watched.

Need it be written the impressions Daniel made? What kith, kin, friends, neighbors, thought of him?—for you must know he was in the lime light of this new world he had entered.

One paragraph of very few lines could contain the consensus of opinions:

He's a man "take him all in all," a true, an ideal American gentleman. His conduct is worthy imitating, bespeaks nobility of character.

The grandfather spake thus to the father on the morning of the fourth day of their visit: "Daniel, if Sir William Hamilton is right, Daniel Jr. is great, for Sir William contends that 'on earth there is nothing great but man; in man there is nothing great but mind,' and Daniel Jr. seems not to have neglected his mind. I congratulate you upon having such a son."

Daniel never failed to act his part nobly and well.

"We are leaving for Greenville in the morning and I want you to go with us and sit on the front with us and help me drive the car, Bettie Jo, won't you?" asked Daniel.

Daniel had been irresistibly drawn to Bettie Jo and since his father had told him she was more like his mother than any of his relatives (save for color of hair), he was enamored, though, he and his father had not had opportunity to intimately, minutely discuss their likenesses. Whether the analogy extended further than personal feature or not, he knew not. He wondered if his mother was as wide awake, was as full of life, love, music, song and laughter as Bettie Jo. She studied (?) perched up under the "orthophonic" as it played "her favorites," soft and low. She was never still while awake

—the radio alternating with the “orthophonic” in keeping pace with her movements.

She had a pet dog, cat and canary. They all seemed to understand her perfectly, and did as she said do—they stayed put. She was marvelous to Daniel.

“The whole family has ‘set down’ on me, Dan, and won’t let me go anywhere, do anything, but *study, study*, and *practice, practice*, simply because I am a junior in school. Gracious how I *do hate* school. Just look what it makes you miss!” and tears rimmed her eyes and fell, as Daniel caught her hand, led her to another part of the house and said:

“Bettie Jo, it was rude, very thoughtless in me to ask you to go with us. I should have been more considerate, for I know you ought not leave school unless absolutely necessary, especially as you are a junior. Will you forgive me?”

No answer.

“Bettie Jo, your mother is right, Jim is right. Jim is just the finest, nicest brother I know (Bettie Jo’s nose went up). You should not lose any time from school. You are too fine, too lovely a girl not to be thoroughly educated, you *must* be, and the time to do it is *now*. You must be competent to see, know and appreciate the big, fine things in life, a thing you can’t possibly do unless you are properly educated. I will come to see you when school is out, we can then have a better time than now for our consciences will be clear. How old are you Bettie Jo?”

“Fifteen in June.”

He whispered in her ear, “I will give you a nobby little roadster (any make you choose) for your very own on your next birthday, if you bring up your grades, everyone of them, the balance of this session. You will be legally old enough then to drive a car and Jim and Grandpa wont object.

“If you will be second to none in your senior year, I will give you a trip abroad for six months or a year, and all the pretty clothes you will need or want. Is it a go?”

“Just see.” She threw her arms impulsively around his neck, kissed him and ran back to the crowd. And Daniel knew that “just see” was as good as an oath registered.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Daniel found “Uncle Tom” and “Aunt Carrie” and their three children:—a young man just graduated from Johns Hopkins, one of the girls teaching school, the other (whom he did not see in the home) in her second year at University, entirely different from the family they had just left, but equally as attractive.

“Father, if your brothers and sisters are as altogether charming as debonair as mother’s are, you are indeed a fortunate man, we a fortunate people. It is usually conceded that there’s a black sheep in every family but I have failed to find even the suggestion of one yet, so I must be *it*. I have thoroughly enjoyed knowing and being with mother’s people. Bettie Jo is my favorite, for more reasons than one, though, I guess because she is the youngest and seems to feel that because she *is* the baby, she has the hardest time of all. Yet she feels and *knows* she has the best end of it; she knows she is their idol especially ‘grandpa’s and Jim’s’ and the way she does use them! It is positively the cutest, most refreshing thing I have seen in a long time. Bettie Jo is all right.” And Daniel was glad *then*, it was Bettie Jo, for he just could not have said Jo, he could never now call any one “Jo”—plain Jo.

“I have no brothers Daniel, had only three sisters. I am the youngest child, the only son.”

“Yes, forgive me, I forgot the moment having heard you say you were an only son.”

“One of my sisters, Julia, married an excellent fellow, William Wallace. He was well fixed. He lived only a few years, ten, I believe, leaving her childless and wealthy. The second sister, Mary, married the same year, a very

good, but kind of improvident, unfortunate, worthless sort of fellow, Oscar Clark. He made a scant living, but was decent enough to keep the others from chastising him and sending him about his business. They have three or four children and Julia took them in her home after William's death, upon a written agreement that he, Oscar, pay her one hundred and fifty dollars a month in advance as board. He made only two hundred and fifty, you can imagine how a man these days can support a wife and children, three of them girls, in the style in which they live on one hundred dollars per. But Julia found that to be the only way to keep him on the job. He is foolishly fond of Mary and the children, they of him, and that keeps him awake and moving.

"He can't 'bide' Julia (as the negro says), can't hand her a thing. Of course the others understand the *casus belli* and in that way, friction is kept down and things move along smoothly. Julia banks the hundred and fifty, that Oscar thinks he is paying in board—equally among the children for their education. She is a splendid business woman, very just, kind and conservative.

"I deeded Mary a place to be hers as long as she lives, then to go to the children. With the revenue from that and a monthly check, she does fine. At first she rebelled,—was chary, very sensitive about our treatment of Oscar—the business part—but I had her over for a week's visit and after explaining what it would mean to her and the children,—Oscar, too,—that it was purely a business transaction, our own private family affair, she finally took a very sensible view of the situation and has been very adroit about it ever since.

"The youngest sister died the second year after marriage at the birth of the baby which also died. Her young husband (Jack Thorsby) was crushed, he could not be reconciled to Peggy's death and after a year he went West. He is now in Berkeley, California, the most beautiful place in the world, he writes. I hear from him occasionally. I understand he is doing well in the real estate business. He has remained unmarried.

"Julia and Mary live in Williamsburg not far from home and where we are to spend the Christmas holidays."

The father noticed a slight shadow pass over the son's face—"Doesn't that suit you, son? Have you other plans?"

"No, not exactly father. I hate so to object to any of your plans for they have been unimpeachable so far. And, too, I so long to see your sisters, to visit them in their home as we have mother's, which has been such a pleasure to me . . . but . . ."

"What son?"

"Father it is too childish, too simple to . . ."

"I am sure it is all right, son, and your wishes and desires shall certainly be respected, have precedence. My happiness, ever remember, will be to do your pleasure."

"Thank you, father; I can truthfully say the same—my happiness is to do your pleasure."

"Thank you, son. What is it you wish?"

"Father, I want to spend Christmas at home alone with you. I don't want to hang up my stocking exactly, but—but—. Do you know I have never hung up my stocking, never had that happy experience, never have been associated with those who have?"

The father sat with bowed head, one hand shading his eyes, for sometime. Daniel looked out the window, he was thinking of the baby-book, of his mother.

The elder man placed a hand feelingly upon Daniel's knee, the eyes still shaded, and said, "Son, we will spend Christmas alone in our home. God bless you."

A lay-over of three hours in Raleigh, was very pleasantly and profitably spent in visiting the capital and a ride out to Chapel Hill, to visit one of Mr. Foster's friends, who was Dean at the University. They found the hours entirely inadequate for the pleasures in store. Daniel found the Arboretum extremely interesting, the first of its kind he had ever seen.

While Daniel, in company with the Dean and others, was exploring the beauties of the University, the elder

Foster, excused himself and sent a lengthy telegram to his sisters in Williamsburg, saying it would be impossible for them to spend the holidays with them as they had planned, but would come as soon after as possible, letting them know the exact date. "A full satisfactory explanation when I see you." He knew the sisters would be fearfully disappointed and possibly, very probably, hurt; but he, too, knew such feeling would flee the moment Daniel's request was made known to them.

CHAPTER XXIX

The two Farrises—father and son—left the yacht waving goodbyes, promising to return within an hour. They hastened their speed. As they entered the open street the wind cut their faces like tiny whip thongs suddenly lashed. They drew their scarfs more closely about their throats, turned the collars of their coats up about their ears, after buttoning every button; then giving their hats a pull to insure more snugness and comfort, they thrust their gloved hands into their pockets, and again increased their speed—the frosty air still tingling and nipping their ears and faces.

Looking at each other they smiled as the older man spoke: "Early morning frost, *ice* still in the air, decidedly biting. Colder than I thought; expect the thermometer registers 10 below. That wind cuts like a knife."

"Yes, but it peps one up, makes him treble quick time. I like it. We" A sudden stop in his speech as he caught his father's arm. "For the past few seconds I have noticed something very familiar about the gait of the fellow just in front of that first group of three men, and unless I am seeing delusions, optical illusions, Daniel Foster just turned that corner" He left his father's side in a run just in time to see the object of his vision enter a barber shop, two doors below.

Waiting for and beckoning his father to hurry, they rushed on, "I am sure that was Daniel Foster. I saw his

profile as he entered the shop, let's hurry in there." The two entered the shop just as Daniel was removing his collar and tie.

Each caught the other's eyes simultaneously. "Well, Daniel," was all the Judge could say. Daniel was struck dumb. The younger Farris had to take charge of affairs. Turning to the barber who stood in wide-eyed wonder, he said, "Excuse us, we will be back presently for the shave and hair cut,—if not we will pay you anyway. Have you a lobby?"

"Yes, to the rear, second door to the right."

Alston Farris came back after a few minutes for Daniel's coat and hat. He paid the price for services not rendered, against the wishes of the barber, "But we kept you from this work. Mr. Foster was in the act of getting a shave and cut when we interfered. It is but fair. He may come down later this morning, doubtless will, then you can straighten finances," and leaving the fee on the counter he hurried back to his father and Daniel.

"Judge, my home is only a few blocks up the street, I am walking, you and Alston must come with me to my father's house."

"Your home! Your father's house? Praise the Lord!" very reverently ejaculated the Judge.

Walking between the two men an arm linked in each, Daniel piloted them to his home.

As they turned in at the walk both Farrises involuntarily glanced up in admiration of the architectural beauty of the Foster home.

The elder Foster was found in the library.

Confusion prevailed for a moment.

"I can say nothing, I am in a trance-like state. Daniel, my son, you must explain," stuttered the Judge.

"I cannot. Father can tell you better than I. Please be seated. I am so over-joyed at this meeting, you will *have* to grant me quiet,—I had rather father would tell you anyway.

What a wonderful flow of language the elder Foster possessed! What a handsome commanding figure he was

—his hair thick, but white as snow, combed smoothly back from his high broad forehead, with a suggestion of a part on the left side; the eyes large and expressive; the finely chiseled mouth and chin bespoke suffering, determination. How his fine eyes glowed with the light of love and pride as they rested upon the form of his boy, as Daniel looked with pardonable pride, upon his stately father as he gave signal to begin.

Only a brief synopsis of the long story was told.

As it was ended every man felt satisfied; felt himself more a man by the part he had played in this unusual, this miraculous drama.

The judge broke the short silence which followed the recital "God surely works in wonderfully mysterious ways his wonders to perform." To which the others uttered a fervent "Amen."

With a fine sense of decorum Mr. Foster never mentioned Jo's name, but to the older Farris and the younger Foster, it seemed she hung on every word and instinctively they sought each other's sympathetic, understanding eye. When propriety permitted the Judge said, "I would be glad to have you all by yourself, Daniel, just for a few minutes if Mr. Foster and Alston will excuse us."

"Certainly, sir."

"This way, Judge," and every nerve and muscle were aquiver as Daniel caught the Judge's arm and led him into the living room where a bright fire crackled and roared up the chimney.

"Daniel," began the Judge, in uncertain voice. "I cannot express an opinion of all this, it's beyond me—I have no opinion. But I must tell you, Jo is with us on Alston's yacht at the landing—she and the others are waiting now for us to return, to take them on a sightseeing expedition."

Daniel paled as he straightened himself, clinched his fists, his eyes flashing as he forced through set teeth. "Please don't, Judge,—don't mention her—for know assuredly she has been my hell in the same proportion she was my heaven, so spare me."

"Why, Daniel, what on earth? You must see Jo, you *must*. How can you afford not to? It would be cruel, damnably cruel to her not to . . ."

"Judge, I cannot, please pardon me. I cannot see her another's wife; do not drive me mad by pronouncing her name." So near yet so very far away—farther than eternity. A groan, as from the depths, tore its way through his soul, his head dropped forward, bent low upon his breast, his entire body relaxed as if in danger of collapse.

The older man's arms were instantly around him as he hurried to say "Jo is not married, Daniel, Jo is *not* married. There is some terrible mistake. Look at me, my boy. Jo is *not married*. I tell you she is waiting for you on Alston's yacht at the landing. If you still love her, go to her at once."

Slowly the dull eyes were raised to the misty ones of the Judge—"She is waiting for you, Dan, she will always be waiting. Jo waits longingly for you, my son," in softest, sweetest, most persuasive tones.

Running the fingers of both hands through his hair, Daniel fell onto a chair.

"I cannot understand. Am I crazy? or has God answered my prayers and am I dead . . . ?"

Suddenly a loud, prolonged, vigorous ringing of the door bell roused both men. A voice was heard saying: "Is this Mr. Daniel Foster's residence?"

"Yes."

"Is he in?"

"I am he." Then the voices were lost—grew audible again. A voice strangely familiar, whose could it be, asking if Daniel were in? Both men rose to their feet and had started for the door as Robert Bishop came rushing in. Almost rudely he said, "Leave us please, I must see Dan alone."

The younger men were in each other's arms as the door closed behind them.

"Dear Lean."

"Dear, dear Lank."

"Dan, your letter reached me eighteen hours ago. I made all possible speed to tell you Jo is waiting for you. The oath was never violated by me, Daniel. Listen,—"

Sitting side by side, an arm thrown back across the back of the seat resting upon the other's shoulder, they sat facing each other in affectionate pose and the side of the story these, and only these two knew, was told. "Knowing you as I did, Lean, I was so horribly afraid lest some unfortunate, sad end overtake you, when everything was so all right.

"I knew you thought, had a right, under agreement of oath, that Jo was married. Coming into your own, though it be a heaven, would be four-fold more hell to you, contrasting what could have been, what should have been, what would have been had some braves died before they were born. Yet, since results have obtained, those same braves need a monument erected to them; for possibly you would never have found your father and home, had you not left as you did; if the need of him, of home, of some one, hadn't driven you on.

"That letter of yours is the grandest document extant today. No mortal can describe my feelings when I read it—or didn't read it. Do you know I couldn't read a line? I had to call Ruth. After she read it to me, I told her all and midst tears and kisses she packed my bag, while I staggered blindly about and shaved, (I had only twenty minutes to catch the train and it two miles away). Both babies joined in the chorus, they thought 'mother' was hurt or sick and bedlam reigned supreme.

"O, what trouble, what turmoil you have made in my home. The only way you can even half way restore things to their right status is to go back with me tomorrow.

"But first tell me how Judge and Alston Farris got here? As the old negro said: 'Everything jes beats my time, I kant understand nuthin'.' I thought they were cruising on the Atlantic?"

Daniel in few words told of the meeting of him and the Farrises. "I wrote Judge and Mrs. Farris the same

mail I wrote you. They haven't received my letter yet . . ." Suddenly grasping Robert by the arm, he almost snatched him off his feet as he dragged him into the library saying: "I can not explain anything, oh, Lank, we'll have a lifetime now to talk this over,—everything. I am going to—I am going now—take care of Lank, father. You folks will excuse me, I know," and he rushed to his room.

Too many things were happening to Daniel in one day's time—he had to change. He had changed. The transition was as complete as it was swift. The curves about his mouth, the infectious smile had asserted themselves, completely obliterating the hard lines; the sparkle had come back with double force to the dark eyes. He had been completely changed from a doubter into the most ardent believer in the sweet, sacred vows—the infallibility of one woman.

As Daniel stood before the men a few minutes later, immaculate in a dark gray suit, they thought,—what an Apollo! How transformed the almost hopeless face of a few hours before! Transfigured would have better expressed the transformation.

The sparkling brightness of the mid-day sun of happiness shown on his face. The father breathed deep within his soul. "Father, forgive me if I love my handsome son too much. You too, lost an only son. You, you only can understand."

All the supreme, satisfying joy of having the life longings of his soul soon satisfied, beamed from Daniel's face as he said:

"I am giving orders now, not taking them, understand? You men may stay here or go anywhere or do anything you please, I am going to the pier. Father, have Henry fix dinner for—oh, I don't know how many—count them up for him Alston. Include all on board the yacht, the crew too. I am bringing or sending them," and with that he rushed out and into his father's car and to the landing.

CHAPTER XXX

The time set for the men's return to the yacht had passed—was long overdue. An hour passed—two hours—still the Judge and his son had not returned. Their wives grew impatient; impatience had merged into worry; worry, into anxiety—what could possibly be detaining them. The highest point of endurance had been reached when a light footstep was heard. Both women looked up as Daniel Foster reached them. Placing a finger over his mouth, shaking his head, he whispered, "Please do not make an outcry, dear, dear Mrs. Farris, I will soon explain all the unexplained. Where is Jo?"

Pointing in the direction of Jo's whereabouts, Daniel removed his hat and ran in the direction indicated by the finger, both women gazing after him in wide-eyed astonishment.

Jo was coming out of the opening, hat in hand, ready for the long promised "tour of the city."

"Jo, my dear, my darling, my darling! I *am* Daniel Foster, *Jr.* Dear Jo, I live with my father on Washington Ave., here in Newport News. I have come to take you to him, to my home. Will you come? Can you, will you forgive me, forgive any and all unkind, rash actions or words, remembering how sorely I was tired and go with me to my father as my affianced bride? Will you?"

Jo stood as one dazed, she could not move; she could not speak. She felt like screaming; but instead, for answer, she burst into happy tears, threw herself convulsively, limply into the arms open to receive her,—buried her face on his shoulder where her burning face could hide from his piercing, searching eyes.

Holding her close in his strong arms, not a word was spoken for sometime; thoughts too deep for expression surged through their souls. He felt her quivering muscles grow more tense as she tried to calm her intensely agitated body. He whispered, as he caught one hand and held it up for inspection: "Is this my ring, Jo, the symbol of our loyalty to each other?"

She nodded in the affirmative.

Burying the hand with kisses, he placed the arm around his neck: "I could break every bone in your precious body by the sheer force of my overwhelming love for you. Do not let me hurt you, my darling Jo."

"How strong the arms of my two full yards of manhood," were the first words Jo could utter.

"And how sweet and precious my five feet five of the loveliest womanliness man has ever been permitted to hold in his arms. Kiss me my darling, kiss me! How many years I have longed for this hour, my dear Jo!" Reverently, gently, kissing the sweet, soft, warm lips held up to him, he uttered a fervent prayer and Jo felt his warm tears upon her cheek and neck.

When the fury of the flame was somewhat burned out, he said, "Jo, father is waiting for you, for us. Come, dear. I want you to meet my father."

He rose, helped her to her feet. Watched her hungrily as she straightened her hair and ran back to her room for a final satisfactory look at herself. She came back, put her hand within his arm and marshaled him before the others—her captive, her king. The crew having heard a commotion, came running, fearing something terrible, some tragedy had happened to the two Farrises.

"Mrs. Farris—both of you—all of you—listen: Judge, Alston and Robert Bishop are at my home, with my father, where they are waiting for you to join them for lunch and as a starting point for your tour of the city. If you are ready, we will start now," and taking Mrs. Farris' hands in his, he kissed them—and drawing her close, took her sweet oval face between his two strong hands, "my sweet mother," he whispered in her ear as he kissed both checks. Whereupon Mrs. Farris burst into tears and threw herself where Jo had just been. Patting her hand as he wiped away her tears, "We are so happy, you will pardon any unseemly act, won't you, Lucy."

And that sympathetic woman, knowing all the circumstances, stood looking on, tears of joy coursing down her

cheeks, she only said: "I am so glad," and stood complacently, as Dan helped her and the others on with their wraps. The crew was asked to join them for lunch. "The car will be sent back for you," but the invitation was politely declined—the men glad for the hours off.

Reaching his home, and after the necessary semi-formality of introductions and customary salutations, Daniel said, "I know it is not the correct thing to leave guests alone at such a crisis, but I am going to do the unusual and ask that you excuse father, Jo and me for a little while. Be as comfortable and happy as you can, 'Henry' and 'Aunt Mandy,' " nodding to each respectively, "are at your service," and holding an arm of his father and Jo, he marshaled them to the back of the house.

A happier three, never faced a happier crowd as Mr. Foster, Daniel and Jo returned a few minutes before lunch was announced. A happier, more garrulous party never sat around a board. Everyone was feeling good—good from the heart and head—the source of most every affliction; hence, the fountain of health and happiness.

The kind consideration, the polite precedent, of one talking at a time was obeyed as far as practical under the existing conditions, which prolonged the hour to two, two and a half for lunch.

As the meal was finished Daniel left his place, stood behind Jo's chair and drawing her to a standing position close beside him said: "As Jo and I are the youngest in this 'bunch' we ask that we be excused and allowed to go for a ride. We will use the roadster leaving the car for you all, father." Bowing to his father his eyes laughing, the irresistible curves about the mouth, the merry chuckle in his voice predominated, which the Judge, Robert and Jo knew, of old, meant that Daniel was entirely satisfied with his lot. He took Jo's arm and started with her toward the door.

As permission was being formally given by all, they arose, followed them out. Admonitions were heaped upon them as to "Be careful of traffic," "Don't stay out

late," "Don't speed," "Tell it to the marines," followed them out past the drive.

The rest of the party then assembled in the drawing room where full recitals of the happenings of the past twenty-three years were to be told midst clouds of fragrant cigar smoke (the ladies willing,—they were all used to it). Mr. Lewis had been sent for. He came in as they were all being seated. He had just gotten in the hour before from a very exciting little trip which he interestingly told before the real epic began.

Every man was in his element,—telling and listening to a good story. It being one time where women could have gone on record as holding still tongues, for not a word was spoken by them, as they listened to their husbands and friends weave the most wonderfully dramatic, romantic, tragic, true narrative they had ever heard or read.

Robert naturally came first. He began at the very beginning,—their first meeting. He told it in simple language, just as it actually happened; no coloring, no enlarging, no contracting. No one interrupted. It was an exceedingly touching time to all assembled. Each was implicated and almost as interested as the other; hence, they did not try to hide their emotions.

As Robert talked, everyone could see the little half starved, ragged boy being pommeled by the ruffian; could see Robert's lank body as it strolled up and took possession of the field; they could see the collection of marbles, nails and other valuables handed each boy after the battle was over,—see them as they made ready to depart, the taller boy's arm placed protectingly around the smaller boy whose face was swollen and covered with blood and dust, whose left eye was completely closed. Could see them as they walked off, totally oblivious of the sympathetic crowd as they guyed the crestfallen bully—cheered wildly the victors, calling affectionately after them, "Good bye, Lank," "Good bye, Lean." Names they both promptly accepted as appropriate—as if they had been introduced. Of his never knowing Daniel's correct

name until the Judge's advent, was pathetically ridiculous.

They followed the boys home; saw the tired mother bathe the face and eyes, holding hot cloths to the bad eye until vision was partially restored, then of the older boy getting the consent of the mother for the crippled boy to stay with them.

They could see the two boys begging a large box from a nearby store; see them lugging it home; see them as the petition was being made across the back hall for their bedroom; the window, with screen as it was installed the next night and the accessories added as their means allowed.

Robert forgot not to tell of the never-to-be-forgotten ten-cent bonus, and the sixty cents given him as a "loan. . ."

They saw him as he separated from Daniel at his place of business; saw him as he bought a newspaper from a "pal," walk confidently to the depot, take a seat and scan the "Want Ads"; saw the dilapidated pocket knife as it was drawn from the jeans' pocket, the badly nicked blade, (but with sharp point) pulled out and outline the favorable ads; saw them sorted, folded once and put in his pocket, as he got up leaving the neatly folded paper on the seat. Saw him get his first haircut by a professional barber; buy his first tie and tie it gingerly under his chin—giving it a last affectionate, proud feel as he put on his cap and sallied forth. Confidence of success having increased in proportion to his improvement in looks and naturally—feelings.

They could vividly see him as with tired, discouraged stride he pulled himself up to a fruit stand, five hours later, purchase his dinner—(an apple), seat himself on the curbing where his crestfallen demeanor announced to the world his morning's failures.

They smiled as he told of his first professional shoe-shine—paid for with his last dime; of Daniel's taking it in the same ratio of business poise and austerity as he had mounted the chair and proffered the wage.

They could vividly see the disconsolate Robert as he came home, after having secured his first job, with his arm in a sling, his head and side heavily bandaged. Then Daniel's sudden flight to realm of a millionaire when he received his thousand dollar check, which saved the day—Daniel having offered him one-half of it. Then of the Uncle's return from California; the heavy gloom which settled upon them at the thought of being separated, before "the Judge" and Mrs. Farris claimed Daniel for their own.

Robert only slightly referred to his business successes and only then as they had to do with Daniel and Daniel's friends, and Robert slightly nodded his head indicating that estimable couple as they sat side by side.

It was the Judge's time to speak. He, too, began with his first meeting with Daniel. How he was *first* attracted to him by his pleasant bearing, the merry curves about his mouth, the appealing brown eyes. How he "stayed put" by the frank courtesy, the polite and honest behavior of the boy.

As he described the home-made shoe shine (the pegs driven in the side forming a rack for the paper purchased with half of the first dime made every morning and handed each patron to read while he made them "look like new"), the emotions became audible as the pathetic business-like procedure of the little waif evolved smiles and laughter through tears.

When he told of his first visit to Lean and Lank; of that being the first time Robert knew Daniel's name and history; of his inquisitiveness as to how their domestic business was conducted, (simply out of admiration for the boys), the tears lost lodgement and rolled down the cheeks of his auditors unheeded.

He told of Daniel's home with him; of the business relations they had to form before he would consent to become a member of his household—and knowing Daniel's ravenous desire for an education and the best things in life, everyone present realized what a tremendous deal it meant to the little fellow and Alston Farris

exclaimed, "Bully for him, showed then what kind of stuff he was made of—one out of ten thousand at that age, I guess." And Mr. Foster nodded his head in full appreciation of what he meant.

He told of the disappointment to Daniel of not becoming the judge he had elected he would become when a small boy; then of his marvelous success in his natural trend—that of finances.

(The first time the elder Foster had heard of his son's then financial standing).

He told of Daniel being so happy in his second aspiration—that of marrying a woman, as sweet, pretty and who would make him as good a wife as Mrs. Farris had made him; how transcendently happy he and Jo had been. Then of the heavy blow which separated the two.

"Daniel was always strictly a reliable, conscientious fellow he concluded; he never outgrew his tender regard for the love and training he received in his first real home with Robert Bishop and his estimable mother." It was Robert's time to bow his head low in deep appreciation of what the Judge said, at the same time give thanks to his Maker for allowing him and his mother the privilege of such a care.

Then turning to Mr. Lewis he said, "We await with genuinely impatient interest to hear you, sir. And that quick-witted, spry, dandy-looking fellow took the floor.

Very entertainingly did he tell of first seeing Daniel as he interferred with the "jackanapes." Of how his every look and move brought before his face the picture Mr. Foster had shown him in words of what he knew his son to be after he had grown to manhood. "And I tell you, friends, if his boy had been standing before him as he gave the description it could not have been more accurate. I do not understand it." After a short pause followed the complete story as told to him by Daniel.

Mr. Lewis, adept in powers of description, reached his zenith when he told of Daniel's anguish, when he knew he

was Daniel Foster, Jr. As he associated Jo,—his lost love—with his father and this beautiful home.

More prosaically he told of his keeping their route and the exact time of arrival a secret, deeming it best that father and son should meet in their home. But again he reached sublime heights as he concluded by telling Daniel's thoughts breathed aloud as he saw his home: "Is this my home? Did my mother teach me to talk and walk under these trees twenty-five years ago?" Of the door opening wide, the son being drawn by outstretched arms within its portals, then the door slowly, softly closing behind them.

All eyes overflowing involuntarily, were focused upon the father.

Absolute neutrality was Mr. Foster's only refuge just then and he clung like mad to that refuge. Some minutes elapsed before he judged himself capable of carrying to a splendid finish the beautiful, the marvelously wonderful story told thus far.

He finally raised his head, crossed his knees, and sat easily in his chair, an elbow on each arm, his fingers loosely locked in front. His eyes sought the floor. As he began to talk of his wife, all ears were erect, all eyes wiped dry—. In clear distinct, low tones he began with the decision he and his wife arrived at in regard to the best care for her and Baby Dan ("as mother had died a few months before"). Of the preparations made, and of the journey begun. His listeners, in pitying sympathy, visualized the closing chapter of the happy family as he told of the horrible death of his wife; of the anxious, frantic search for his and his boy's bodies in the burning pyre; of the hat with baby-glove being found later in the river; of the fruitless work of divers and dredgers; of his senseless, bleeding body being found the next day in the middle of the road, some distance from the place of accident, picked up and carried more than twenty-five miles on a truck in the opposite direction from which it should have been carried; of the driver

reporting an automobile accident, which was accepted as facts.

Of his horrible awakening two weeks later, to find they had not seen or heard of his wife and boy. Of his madness. Of the never-ending search, after advertising failed; then of his final success. He then told some of Daniel's behavior since getting home, only suggesting them (the parts Mr. Lewis did not know or failed to mention) he couldn't bear to go into details—his boy had been too glorious, too personal—too intimate for that. Those thoughts, those visions were his very own—his reward for the tedious long years of waiting.

As he told of his business with Mr. Rush, of his talk and instructions to Mr. Lewis—everyone sat a little forward—"The rest can better be imagined," he finished . .

"Just what power, what phenomenon, what psychic influence or principle would you attribute such a feeling, such a presentiment or whatever the nature of the procedure, to cause one to feel so positive about a thing? It is decidedly out of my ken. Decidedly weird, supernatural to me. What is your opinion, your solution?" asked the Judge of Mr. Foster.

All eyes were again upon the father.

"I do not know. I do not know. I *do* know I have experienced — we all have, (doubtless to more or less degree) the power of telepathy. The longing, the hungering for my boy was so pronounced—was so powerful an emotion of my conscious and subconscious mind,—and my boy being so down-cast, so hopeless,—doubtless, the longing, the hungering for his home and loved ones were of the same force as mine, perhaps these two forces met, who knows?

"I know, we all know, we can communicate across the mighty deep by wireless. We all know of the wonders of the radio. Our workings and results of these workings of the past weeks, months, yea years, have been no more wonderful to me.

"The most wonderful phenomena—if phenomenon it can be called, of all to me is one that is as old as time.

The fact that a poor, weak, insignificant mortal; without a penny or a friend—can, in the dark quiet of his closet, without uttering a sound, cause his innermost thoughts to mount upon wings and be carried through infinity to the throne of God instantaneously,—if they are offered in the manner and spirit He directs,—and the petition will be granted. Thus, I reply it is infinite, not comprehensive to me; but exceedingly soothing, exceedingly comforting to my soul; without it how do you suppose I could have lived all these years?” and Mr. Foster looked up as if imploring divine guidance, and every head bowed in reverence and in admiration of the man who had borne so much and with such confidence, such fortitude. Their respect and esteem for both father and son were boundless.

Smiling, Mr. Foster looked at the two ladies—his eyes resting upon Mrs. Farris, Sr., and continued: “Are we ungallant that we have spoken before the ladies, before Mrs. Farris, Sr., my son’s adopted mother?”

“Not in the slightest degree, Mr. Foster. My part in the life of Daniel was merely by-the-way; but I assure you was very sweet, pleasant and profitable. It would not have been at all, had it not been for the Judge, you know,—however, I am as proud and happy over the results as any of you can possibly be. Mr. Foster, Daniel was a sweet, affable, model child; a model, adorable youth; a charming, lovable, Adonis. We were proud to call him son; we are proud of the small part we have played in his life and rejoice in his full happiness in the same ratio we grieved and mourned for him in his disappointment and wanderings.”

The three men most interested felt gratified at the part they had taken in this wonderful life drama—all had the glorious satisfaction of feeling he had done his best, there was no cause for regrets; no cause for bitter reflections; each felt instinctively he had done his part nobly and well and was exceedingly happy he had.

Robert fitted into first place, because of the good Samaritan and the widow’s mite being verified so magnif-

icently, so courageously and for the years that need was greatest.

Judge Farris shared equal honors with the father and royally bore his honors.

Mr. Foster's heart and brain were too full for further discussion. He got to his feet and every heart was touched, responded, as he walked over to Mrs. Farris, took her hands in his and in quiet dignity stooped over, kissed them as he thanked her for the mother love, protection and care she had so magnanimously given his motherless,—his lost boy. Not a dry eye in the room as he took a hand each of Judge Farris and Robert, held them in warm clasp for a long moment, then gently dropping them he slowly turned and left the room. His quiet dignity inspired a high degree of respect.

Presently he came back looking fresh—absolutely happy and content. "My cars and chauffeur are at your service, Judge and Mrs. Farris. Henry knows Newport News and surrounding territory, he will be glad to take you and yours anywhere, give you any information about our beautiful city."

"Thank you, Mr. Foster, we will avail ourselves of this opportunity and pleasure, but before leaving—we want you, Robert and Mr. Lewis to have dinner with us at seven tonight on the Merribird."

"Thank you, Alston and Judge, we will be glad to come, won't we?"—and he turned to address Mr. Lewis and Robert.

"I thank you, Judge, but I have another engagement for the evening, which I can not postpone. Wish I could,—for I would enjoy being with you immensely, I am sure," said Mr. Lewis.

"I will be glad to join you all tonight—and thank you," rejoined Robert. "I will delight in the experience of visiting and eating on a yacht, to say nothing of further extending my pleasure by being with you all. This will indeed be a monumental twenty-four hours for me."

"For us all, Robert," said the Judge, "And won't you join us in our ride, Robert; I believe you are a stranger in Newport News, too? I understand Mr. Foster nor Mr. Lewis can go."

"No, I can't go this time, thank you."

Left alone with Mr. Foster, Robert asked that he might see the house and grounds—as Dan's home. The bold style of architecture made most alluring the inside with its almost luxurious furnishings. Daniel's quarters were the last visited and the two sat in low cushioned winged chairs for a long intimate talk.

Robert was indeed and in truth happily happy, as he visualized Dan and Jo in their elegant home—in this their beautiful apartment. He never enjoyed time more. "Mr. Foster,—Dan, mother and I, had a happy life—if it was hard, poor and exceedingly discouraging at times. I want to say here to you that had Daniel Foster not been beaten by the bully, had I not interfered, our histories—my history—would have been quite different. Dan put the fire to learn—to be educated; to love, to aspire to the better, higher things of life, into my then inert, latent, rusting, rotting heart and brain. He fired me with an ambition to be somebody, to be a man. The first impulse I had to right living and thinking I owe to him. Though younger by two years (at that time of life two years is quite a difference) he wielded a powerful influence for good and it's to him I owe my very life, certainly its many rich blessings. He was so everlastingly, so always at it. He never let up, prodded me day and night; I had to 'come up' as he expressed it—to get any peace. Mother had to work hard all the time, oftentimes when she was too ill. Only since I have been married, and with children of my own can I understand, can I appreciate how she suffered. Still the mental suffering must have far outstripped her bodily suffering, for she was exceedingly proud and could not bear to see,

much less have to endure what was forced upon her. Hence, she was never in condition, physically, to know (and the time was fast coming) when she did not care—she was nearing desperation's door. It is true Uncle Robert came along at an exceeding opportune time; but, if I had not had Daniel's three or four years training and tutoring it would have amounted to but little; as it was, the ground was well tilled, ready for any opportunities or advantages thrown my way—which were many, and which, I believe I can honestly say, were used to the very best advantage possible. Of course we all had to work hard early and late, scheme and contrive many ways to make 'buckle and tongue' meet the first few years, but God was good and abundantly rewarded our labors.

"The results of his influence are waiting the pleasure of the worthy father of a most worthy son. I know that Dan and Jo will be married right away and I take this opportunity to tell you, sir, my home, all that I have, is yours to use as you please, then and at any time you choose.

"I want you to know mother, Uncle Rob, Ruth and my babies,—Lydia Lu and Daniel Foster."

"Thank you, most noble Robert, for your kind expressions of appreciation of my son, also for the proffered use of your home. Daniel has told me some of its many graces, he enlarged greatly upon his adjectives when describing your camp and hunting preserves. But most thoroughly do I appreciate that last."

"What, Daniel Foster?"

"Yes. Does Daniel know?"

"No, he does not, unless Jo has told him and I do not suppose they have touched earth long enough at a time for such a prosaic topic of conversation as yet."

Both laughed heartily and were still in close converse when Henry announced "baths ready—time for dinner."

CHAPTER XXXI

The Merribird was indeed gay that evening. Everything bespoke—declared to the world—good feeling, good will to all. Their cup of happiness was overflowing and as many as could, must share in the overflow.

Jo came in with but little time left to dress for dinner. Mr. Foster and Robert had left for the landing before Daniel got home. He arrived at the landing just a few minutes before time to take his place with Jo in the line of march to the table.

The same table, one of crescent shape, was used as upon two other occasions when Alston Farris and his wife had entertained a few prominent personages of war-time fame.

There was nothing profuse—simple elegance and refinement. Lucy Farris' talent—one among many—was artistry and on no previous occasions had she so artistically displayed this talent.

The senses were charmed through the eye—filling the heart with the same raptures that must possess a bird as it, in its unrestrained joy, wings its merry flight through the gentle breezes of a soft, mellow spring sunshine, almost bursting its little throat in pouring out exuberant notes of gladsome song.

As Daniel gazed upon his bride-to-be, exquisite in her pure white evening frock with many glistening, glittering spangles, and the scenes before him, his whole countenance became ineffable, he mused: "I have reached my harbor of supreme satisfaction at last after so many years of disparaging uncertainties, so many perilous voyages—may I ever be worthy such great kindnesses as I have had heaped upon me this day—this hour."

Every one was seated except Jo, Daniel and the Judge as he announced in very impressive language the engagement and approaching marriage of Jo Byrne Allison and Daniel Benson Foster, Jr., and asked each and everyone present to attend the "wedding just three weeks from to-day, about this same hour, at the church in Brighton. No

cards to be issued." Then as Jo and Dan stood hand in hand—the friends who had been "friends in need and friends indeed" looked upon the scene as something almost holy.

As Mr. Foster looked with love and admiration on the handsome couple in such a beautiful setting, he thought the angels in heaven might have cause to envy the two who with bowed heads were receiving the blessings bestowed audibly by the Judge; in spirit, by the others.

Promptly at nine o'clock, as the last course of dinner was fully over—a band came noiselessly in and assembled in the place appointed. They were followed by a few of Mr. Foster's closest friends and neighbors, and the officers and executive board of a ship (friends of Alston Farris) then anchored in the harbor; and music, games, pleasant conversation were indulged in; an occasional couple taking the floor as the music appealed too strongly to their terpsichorean nature to hold still-feet longer. While Euterpe presided, Cupid and Venus joined hands with Terpsichore and ruled until Aurora threatened to encroach upon the King of night.

Jo, never remembered being in a crowd of more charming, gallant men; more beautiful, cultured women and girls. She was in the height of her glory and her pleasing personality, ready wit and originality of idea and expression made her the center of attraction, much to Daniel's miserable adoration. Not one of the younger set seemed to know or care that he was her especial guest; that he had been away from her so long; that she was *his*.

Every one had met and admired the long lost son and his friends from "the South." The spirit of the evening was extremely contagious and all joined in the cheer and good will of the hour.

As host and hostess had occasion for a moment with each other they would whisper, "Aren't Dan and Jo just the most wonderfully ideal couple you have ever seen? God bless them."

The hour was late when Robert Bishop came, among

the very last to bid his host and hostess good night. "I understand this cruise will soon be over—then I hope to see each and every one of you in my home; until then, good night."

Daniel was loathe to leave, but he had already tarried as long as the most charitable chaperon would have allowed. But not yet,—Jo was teasing.

"Daniel, I fear we have been too hasty in having our engagement announced, I am sick at heart . . . "

"Jo, what on earth do you mean?" as he caught her forcibly by the shoulders—"come, I will not let you, of all people on this earth, talk like that—cast the least suggestion of a cloud upon this, the most perfect day mortal man has ever been granted to experience . . . "

She interrupted.

"Dan, dear Dan, listen. You haven't had even a suggestion of a chance. As I looked at all those beautiful, charming, absolutely captivating girls tonight, I said to myself,—'Dan shall have his chance, he shall not think he is irrevocably bound to me.' Your father—that wonderful father of yours, may have—doubtless has—plans and suggestions for you, and you must at least know, hear them, and try them out."

All the glory was beginning to fade from Daniel's face. That tyrant, that green-eyed monster jealousy was taking him by the throat. He was suffocating as the handsome, gallant men of the evening passed in review before him—especially one stalwart, prepossessing fellow who was Jo's shadow the entire evening. He had heard of love at first sight,—could this be Jo's meaning? Again he forcefully gripped her shoulders, looked piercingly into her eyes, and began to speak . . . "Jo—"!

"Wait until I get through—You owe it to him, Dan, to yourself, your father's friends and me."

He tried to speak calmly, he took a good grip on himself, but his voice was unnatural as he said:

"Jo, do you love someone else?"

"Dan, what a foolish question. You know I do not."

"Then, Jo, my darling Jo, I am surprised and hurt to

hear you say such of me. Do you think I could ever, in this world, love any one as I love you? Do you think a man's heart is a changeable thing to be switched on and off as desired; that love is the growth of will? If mine could have been, rest assured, my dear Jo, it would have been passed on to another long since, for I wanted, I needed, I longed for a home of my own with the woman I loved, with hungry, unsatisfied longings, where—with—where love would reign supreme. I guess the desire for such is more paramount, more pronounced in my nature than in most men's, because of the fact I have never had a home since I could remember—since I was three years old—until now. I do not want this one if you do not share it with me and father. The more perfect, the more ideal it is, the more of a hell it would be to me by comparison; by the reveries that would completely swamp and drown every other thought.

"No one appreciates my father, his station in life, his most excellent friends and neighbors more than I. Indeed I am flattered—beyond telling—to own, to call him my own, and claim his friends as mine. They are great, wonderfully great, no questioning that; for all of which I am most thankful.

"I want you to know too, Jo, I have seen, been thrown with, have associated with women of every nation (comparatively speaking) of every class and clan; with staid belles and 'high-lights' as well as the present-day flapper. I have earnestly, with all the power of my life, tried to love other women. At times the efforts nearly drove me insane.

"When a sweet-looking, pretty, attractive, accomplished girl would cross my path, I'd think 'surely I can love her, for she is altogether lovely. I will make her love me, if I can, and in so doing will grow to love her, as "love begets love." ' The trial would be made.

"When her preferences for me would be unmistakably shown, I would think all will be well this time, there is absolutely nothing to prevent; she is of splendid family, stands high socially and financially (though finances

never bothered me, never entered my brain in affairs of that nature, I always felt I could make a living). Everything would run smoothly until the time when I could not honorably wait longer to declare myself, then in the lonely quiet of my room all would fall in ruins at my feet. I would tear my hair, clench my teeth and fists in utter despair, for try as I would, your image, your sweet face would come before me, daring me to forget until I became convinced that self-destruction was the only possible relief.

“When I thought you were married (even though I had left you, because I was forced to believe I had no right to you), only God knows what I suffered. I was a raving maniac, with no hope for relief beyond the grave. The only surcease from anguish and pain was in drink, when I would drown myself in oblivion.

“My darling, when I knew I was Daniel Foster, when I heard my own father call me ‘my son’; when I knew I was in my own home, my mother’s home, the thought that you would never be with me, that I could not even let you know, pitched me head long into hell’s darkest pit—made the sweet unbearably bitter. I told father I had a thousand times rather have finished my course as a nameless tramp—as B. D. Retsof, the wanderer—than to have to bear the unutterable longing, loneliness—disappointment. The darkest hour I ever spent, was the hour after father and I had made a tour of our home and grounds, when he left me alone in my own room to reflect, to think of the precious hallowed memories of my mother he had so beautifully shown me; when I read the diary she had written with her own fingers, of her boy; if ever a man has waded through the ‘Slough of Despond,’ if ever a man has come face to face with the unsurmountable, where the sides rise so straight and high they seem to lean toward, completely closing you in, swallowing you up: I am that man. I was hopeless, helpless in the pitch darkness of deepest gloom. But, it was the hour nearest the dawn of this most blessed—this sacred day, and hour.

“Dear Jo, you are the only woman on earth I love—

the only woman who can ever be my wife." Drawing her gently close to him, he kissed her softly, tenderly, once.

"You are growing cold, my darling, I can not keep you longer. Speed the day when I will not have to leave you.

"I will be over early—no, you must sleep late of necessity. I will come for you as soon as I can, remember you belong to father and me all by ourselves tomorrow—to-morrow a fete, my jubilee! I will be for you at ten." He drew out the handsome timepiece—his father's gift—and pocket flashlight to see the time. "Let's see, that will give you eight or eight and a half hours for your beauty sleep (I believe beauty specialists say the magic hour is the early morning or is it just before midnight?) and you don't need that much to make you beautiful. Good night, my peerless, my glorious Jo."

CHAPTER XXXII

"Alston has consented to stay a full ten days longer at Newport News. He says Ann and Flo got a letter from home this morning which has completely changed their plans—they are to go by their sister's for Christmas so that necessitates the railroad or bus, and they can go more direct from here and better than from any other point—so no one will be upset or disappointed. It will take us only a few days to get home. Mr. Foster and Dan are to go back on the yacht with us and be the house guests of Judge and Mrs. Farris until after the wedding. Then Mr. Foster will be in Robert's and Ruth's home—while Dan and I will be at the camp for a week, all of you visiting us there. Isn't that lovely of Alston, Lucy? Isn't that program wonderfully perfect? Can one jot or tittle be added to make it more perfect?"

"Yes, I think it is."

"O, everyone is so gloriously kind and gracious to me, I am overcome. I feel so unworthy," and falling across the bed, she cried herself to sleep. When Daniel came an

hour later, she was still sleeping. He would not allow them to waken her—"We can have a game or if you are otherwise engaged, I will go over and see what our friends across the way are doing, if they will allow me on board."

Jo found Lucy Farris' artistic taste, and Mrs. Judge's (as they all learned to designate them on the cruise) good judgement and business sense, of much value in the selection and making of her wardrobe. Two seamstresses were installed on the yacht; with the two Mrs. Farris' nimble fingers, interspersed with Jo's whirlwind visits and stitches, and when she could stay long enough for necessary fittings and proper adjustment of draperies, a full day's work was accomplished. As a result, a very complete, delicately sweet trousseau was lain away at the end of the ten days.

"This white ivory is quite the prettiest quality I have seen, madam. The entire gown with those lace inlets in combination with the lovely designs in beads and that other glittering, glistening, dangling stuff is decidedly the most exquisite creation I have ever seen.

"When the veil of that rich looking lace is attached to your shoulders, Jo—oh! it has a way of adding super-softness to that already billowy soft dress. It reminds one of a light, airy cloud being overshadowed by one of slightly varying hue, letting the lights and shadows through here and there. You are positively the loveliest of God's creation in that ensemble.

"Dan has just come up, I heard him; let me bring him in to see you. He . . . "

"No, no, please don't, Lucy, I do not want him. . . I . . . "

Too late, Daniel was at the open door with letters for them, one a special delivery for Jo. Another addressed to him, but written jointly to him and Jo from Robert, which he had opened, but was waiting for her to read with him.

He stopped short. Never had he dreamed human could look as heavenly as did Jo. The beautiful curls, that he had admired and loved since a little boy, were in wild confusion about her sweet, white face and pink ears, they glistened and glittered as much as the trimmings on her gown; the large eyes were as bright and twinkled like stars against a fringe of long, black, curling lashes; she was altogether lovely. He could only stand and stare. After a little he spoke rather hesitatingly, as he held up the letters for inspection; "Jo, I will keep these until you are ready to come out here to me." Placing the other mail on a chair just inside the door he turned on his heels and walked slowly away.

Jo hurried to get the mail; nothing thrilled her like getting letters, especially "specials." Daniel sat composedly beside her as she read the special delivery from her father and mother in answer to a night letter and telegram she and Daniel had sent them the day and afternoon he had "found her," telling them of the happenings and begging that they come to be with them. The mother said she could come for a day or two, possibly, but as they were all coming home so soon she had better stay there and get the home in readiness for the wedding. "I'll have to tell a secret so you will know why I can't come: the house is torn up from front to back and has been for two months, to have it new as a surprise for you when you get home from the cruise; now an entirely new thought it brings."

"O, I am so glad, I am so sorry!" Jo inconsistently complained. "I am getting to be a real baby I couldn't help shedding a few tears of joy when Alston and every one were so amazingly good and sweet to me and now of disappointment because I want mother and daddy so much, Dan, while I am—we are—so happy. Dan, please leave me for a little while. I will be all right in a few minutes, then I will call you." Instead of leaving her, he took her in his arms, but her tears had vanished,—instead of crying she looked up into Daniel's face and sweetly, smilingly, said, "I don't believe I will ever cry

again except for joy, dear Dan," and Daniel had never loved her as he did at that moment. "God grant you shall never have cause to cry save for joy, my Jo.

"Come, I want to take you to the shipyards, it is exceedingly interesting out there. I will get your heavy coat and hat, where are they? Can Lucy get them for me?"

"My spring coat is on the chair just inside that door, I do not know exactly where my heavy wrap is, I will have to look for it. Do you think I will need it in a closed car?"

"Yes, I think so, unless you had on a warmer dress. It is growing much cooler since the little blow and shower this morning and I suspect we'll be out late." Daniel loved her in the coat with the big fur collar; her eyes peeping above it was delightfully fascinating to him, kept him in a whirl of agreeable thoughts; kept him quiet so she had to do all the talking; he so loved that, too, for then frequently she would place her hand on his arm for emphasis and he could feel the love tokens in the pressure of her hand, see them flash from her ring, for she seldom wore a glove unless she was driving.

"Dan, why didn't you tell me my nose was shiny and needed powder?" she said as she looked in the mirror after he had helped her in the car and they were gliding slowly away.

"I thought you knew powder would rub off on woolen cloth"; he solemnly rejoined. She turned crimson as she furtively glanced at his sleeve and lapel, the movement filled him with exquisite delight and satisfaction. Jo was ideal—perfect.

"And you would have let me gone right on amongst strangers, even before your father, without telling me."

"Why not, haven't they as much right to endure such a calamity as I? Besides if it had affected or impressed them as forcibly as it did me—"

And the merry, contented laugh of the winner was a "thing for the birds to hear." It produced an irresistible pout of her lips as she severely said:

"Finish up, sir, do not keep me in suspense." Whereupon he stopped the car,—and more fresh powder was needed.

As the car again moved slowly ahead she read aloud Robert's letter. It was indeed admirably worded,—worthy, in every way, the man who penned it. "We must keep this always, Dan, it is lovely—so like dear Bob," she folded the letter, replaced it in the envelope and dropped it in her purse.

CHAPTER XXXIII

"Christmas in my own home, with my father and my sweetheart—nothing more I can ask—nothing more could be added. It makes me shiver and shake to contrast this with a year ago: a stranger in a strange land, sleeping the sleep of the dead—dead drunk," reflected Daniel as he sat before the fire upon a divan with Jo between him and his father.

Mr. Foster, Daniel and Jo had made the home a bower of Christmas cheer and beauty. They were resting from their labors, sitting before a bright blazing fire, sipping hot tea with lemon, eating cheese straws.

Daniel had never worked harder, never realized less that he had worked. He had never been as content as now. In dream-like state he thought, not so much of the present Christmas, but of others to follow—maybe with little stockings to be filled. His brain was so full of turbulent thoughts dashing hard, wild and high, he was fearful lest they penetrate his brain and ruin this hour,—possibly every hour yet to come. He got up, shook himself and taking his characteristic favorite pose,—back to the fire, his left hand thrust deep in his pocket—dallying with his watch charm with the right, he began very sedately: "Twas the night before Christmas when all through the house, not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse"—stopping abruptly, turning on his heels, he gave a low, musical whistle. Looking at the laden tree,

he shook his head, striking a mock tragic pose, he continued, "Glorious time of great too much, time and talent most elaborately squandered." He resumed his seat, placed an arm around Jo. Thus they sat waiting for their friends, enjoying the work of their hands, while the radio sweetly dispensed, "Silent Night, Holy Night," by Schumann-Heink.

Daniel and Jo had spent several hours placing lights of rainbow hue in thick, graceful lines over a growing Christmas tree—a comparatively tall, shapely cedar in the sideyard. It was conspicuously beautiful from the street and the approach to the house. It was beautiful when finished and one among the first outdoor living Christmas trees seen in those parts. It attracted many eyes in its direction and elicited much favorable comment.

They had also planted a large Christmas tree before the double windows of the living room, which looked out upon the street. The shades were raised so the tree, with its many bright, vari-colored lights, laden with every regalia necessary to make it typical, could be seen from the street and add its glow of cheer to heighten the gladsome spirit of the hour. The large star in the extreme top was exceptionally attractive with a tiny electric bulb concealed in the foliage of the tree reflecting again and again the reflected, refracted lights on its tinseled surface. It was left burning after all other lights were switched off; and that, with two long red tapers burning—one in each opposite window of the room—and the glow of the fire, was the only source of light in the front part of the house, as they sat waiting for their friends from the Merribird and others.

As the father looked upon his son, he thought of the hanging stocking that never had been for his boy and was so overwhelmingly touched he repaired to his room so he could give vent to his feelings—to pour out his heart in joy and thanksgiving.

The victrola was again playing, "Silent Night, Holy Night," when friends and those of the Merribird were

as merry birds as they came tripping in, light snow bedecking their head-dresses and wraps.

Saluting, the men stood at attention, as Alston in mock dignity said: "Christmas is here, salute the tree, et cetera . . . "

"We are dazzled by such glittering glow,"—they exclaimed as in one voice, as all the lights were flashed on, after the soft, soothing restful, uplifting glow—the real spirit Jo intended for the occasion—had been fully seen, grasped and appreciated.

"Turn those lights off again! The effect we got as we entered the drive and opened this door with the victrola's 'Silent Night,' was splendid, too satisfying to be upset just yet by too much light. This, with that outdoor Christmas tree is too alluring, too suggestive of the time celebrated to destroy our involuntary worship with too much glare," quickly interjected Lucy Farris. Her aesthetic nature rebelled against too much show at the wrong time.

"Mrs. Judge" told the story of The First Christmas simply, sweetly as if to tiny children. Nothing could have appealed to them as forcefully as this did,—especially to Daniel and his father. It was the first time Daniel had ever heard the story *told*. Never had the difference between spoken and written language appealed to him so much. Then followed the story of Van Dykes' "Other Wise Man."

The stories being finished, Henry came in to replenish the fire, while the faint, familiar rattle of a furnace being replenished was heard below. Sufficient expected noises to completely destroy the quiet approach of Jack Frost closely followed by Santa Claus, until they came fully in view with the paraphernalia—the complete trappings, of those two well-known characters.

Absolute dumfounded surprise reigned supreme as each looked at the other trying to find the guilty party, while Jack and Santa with quiet dignity took their places. Finally all eyes rested upon Jo and Mr. Foster. Jo blushed her guilt—her maroon frock with soft cream lace collar

and cuffs and long, black, narrow ribbon tie, enhanced the glow of her radiant face.

The distribution of the conglomeration of gifts began. Such an array of articles can not easily be imagined. The Woolworth - Silver - Kress varieties perfectly — unmistakably—depicted a hobby or some peculiar, outstanding characteristic of the recipient. Santa had been well versed in his speils and being adept in the art of merry-making, wit and humor, produced unconstrained sounds of merry laughter as each gift was presented, and was carefully opened and displayed by the recipient.

The gifts worth-while—which bespoke the deep, appreciative feeling each had for the other were given with appropriate words and produced real joy; provoked thoughts which would last through time. The entire ensemble of that night was never forgotten by those present.

The identity of the apparitions which had remained secret, was then satisfactorily settled.

Mr. Ben Lewis, and Mr. F. M. Warren (the bachelor friend of Mr. Foster) evolved into gentlemen, perfectly dressed in evening attire—all ready for the serving of refreshments.

The twelve-year-old twin daughters of Mr. Lewis were the next and “last numbers on the program.” They came airily in, dressed as snow fairies, dragging an immense Yule log which they placed upon the hearth by the fire. From which they served the first course of Dan and Jo’s delightful viands.

And with what satisfying satisfaction Jo had superintended the making of those refreshments—yea, verily, had made some of them with her own hands—in “Dan’s kitchen,” while that young man helped by getting in the way—blocking traffic. “I have to sit or stand where I can watch the face of the cook to see by her expression whether I am doing right or not,” he complained when scolded, as he peeled oranges, stoned cherries, grated cocoanut and opened cans. When he had finished his

last job he was given an "honorable discharge," — which he did not accept until the head chef walked out with him hand in hand; her face, hands and dainty rubber apron covered with flour, sugar, and, she thought, fruit juices, "as it is so sticky and hard to get off." "This stuff sure ought to be good, whether it is or not; I've worked hard and long enough with it," he smilingly complained.

Saturday night had merged into Sunday morning before the guests departed. Alston Farris exclaiming, as he took his wife's and mother's arms and escorted them through the outer door and down the steps, (closely followed by the other guests), "Behold, the sun in russet and gold will soon be peeping at us over that far, distant, snow-capped eastern hill, so we must hurry as we bid you one and all a happy good night."

Jo followed in snow-white wrap which completely hid every suggestion of red, save the cheeks which were like American beauty roses as they moved up and down, round and round, behind the high, soft fur collar. Daniel, in wolf-like brown, walking slightly behind her, as they went to the car, seemed to swallow her up completely—she was entirely hidden from the father's view as he stood on the steps where he bade them good night.

The father went in, closed the door, and sat by the fire to await Daniel. The last good nights were said, doors were closed and locked—all lights out except the star and Christmas tapers burning in windows, which gave Christmas greetings to all passers-by as the snow was slowly falling, laying a soft mantle over the whole earth.

They all met again, on the morrow in the church, the anthem, "Christmas awake, greet this blessed morn, whereupon the Savior of the world was born," broke the stillness.

Every heart leaped with joy as the whole congregation stood and sang: "Glory to God in the highest, glory, glory, glory, glory, glory be to God on high"—for the "poor whom you have with you alway," had not been forgotten and all were glad.

CHAPTER XXXIV

"Ship ahoy," greeted Daniel and Mr. Foster as they came down to the landing the morning they were to set sail, followed by Henry with their luggage.

With all on board—everything in readiness, the Merri-bird turned her head slowly southward and began her homeward flight.

The days of the journey home were busy ones, but full rounds of jubilees. Every one was superbly, superlatively happy. All were deeply interested in the same things, hence; harmony prevailed. Naturally much time and discussion were given to planning Jo's and Daniel's wedding. Naturally enough, too, their thoughts reverted to those diabolical scavengers of society—the town gossips, assassins of character and soul; those who had been instrumental in sending Daniel away a nameless wanderer—a B. D. Retsof: bringing untold anguish, pain, bitter tears, broken hearts, disappointments, loneliness, sorrow,—to many.

If one could have heard the last audible sounds of the yachting party as the still, awe-inspiring, mysterious hush of darkness crept over the earth; when gloaming deepened into night and nature had spread her brooding wings over all the creatures of men bidding them rest,—cease from wearisome toil and pain; if one could have heard their evening prayers expressed in song as night winged his westward way—they would have known that they had risen far above all sordidness; above all such character - destroying, brain - warping activities. They would have known that all hatred, all strife, all enmities were forgiven and would be forgotten as far and as soon as possible: that pity and compassion had supplanted the natural feelings of ill-will and rancoring hate.

In the stillness of a star twinkling night came the soft cadences of their evening prayer,

Softly now the light of day
Fades upon our sight away;
Free from care, from labors free,
Lord, we would commune with Thee.

Thou, whose all-pervading eye
Nought escapes, without, within,
Pardon each infirmity,
Open fault, and secret sin.

Soon from us the light of day
Shall forever pass away;
Then, from sin and sorrow free,
Take us, Lord, to dwell with Thee.

The minor strains of Gottschalk were never more impressively beautiful.

When the heart is full—full of the emotions it wishes to express, the voice needs no prop, no crutch, no mechanical contrivance of any kind to make the pitch, the sound, the rhythm harmoniously beautiful.

No music is so sweet, so soul-inspiring, so wonderfully perfect as the human voice when the heart is making the melodies.

If other ears were fortunate enough to catch the vibrations of those voices (though untrained from a master's view) as they floated out as a benediction over those Southern waters that calm, still night, they will vibrate with resonant heart throbs for days. If it be true that "sound never passes away," the songs sung those nights will resound through the ages. Every note was roundly, mellowly masterfully sung; the intonation almost perfect—the kind of melody that lifts one bodily to the very throne of God.

Daniel became the idol of all on board. He was the ambassador of good cheer, laughter and song; the handyman, the adviser, the counselor,—certainly the perfect lover.

He kept them entertained; their interests and curiosities whetted to the highest, keenest point with his nar-

rations of his visit to his mother's people, for whom he had aroused much respect—and a desire to know. His recapitulations of Bettie Jo and Jim were the "Punch and Judy" of their leisure hours.

Daniel seemed verily to have been born again on his twenty-seventh birthday. His true nature and disposition had never been known,—had never been free to express themselves until now.

Daniel Foster, Sr., had grown twenty years younger in the society of his boy. He certainly would have been exonerated by the world for the very exalted opinion he had of Daniel.

Neither Judge Farris nor Mr. Foster had reached the age in life when new friends were not welcome; where a new confidential friendship was depressing — boring; where a quiet corner, in an easy chair and favorite smokes were preferred and gave all they desired, all that was necessary for their continued stay upon earth; all the incentives needed for another day—sufficient reminiscences for another night.

Each seemed as buoyant, as exhilarated as the youngest and entered into every phase of each day's programs with the fervent earnestness and keen relish of the best.

All these new friendships were more than satisfactorily welcomed; however, those two seemed mutually attracted the one to the other and better satisfied when near the other. Many a quiet personal chat they had. All instinctly let "water seek its level" and did not disturb the placid waters. They rejoiced rather in the lovely panoramas they made as the massive head of Mr. Foster, with its thick snow-white hair, which gave a sweet, sublime majesty to the happy, contented, cheerful light upon the face often inclined so as to look into the clear eyes of the Judge to hear what he said, whose black-grey hair bore pleasing contrast as it leaned forward to catch the beam of the father's eye and the low, deep cadence of his voice. Not infrequently were arms across each other's shoulders.

Once when in quiet conversation with Judge Farris, Mr.

Foster said: "Judge, can you imagine what a joy, what inexpressible happiness, what absolute satisfying comfort it is to me to have him with me? To see his mother shining in his eyes, to hear her laughter in his, to observe and trace her many adorable ways and expressions? Never doubt again, if you ever have, that like begets like or the likeness thereof; for he is very like her in face, form and fashion. It is wonderful, infinite to me—simply God."

Did the Judge feel a pang of jealous pain as he listened, hesitating before making reply? No. He was too big, too great for that,—the word is not chronicled that can define his feelings. He replied:

"To a small degree I think I can. I think I *do* appreciate your feelings—*do* understand. Daniel was my son—our son, the formative period, the plastic age of his life. His youth and young manhood were spent in our home. We did our best by him. He was made of the best material with which to work and I am—we are—proud with you of the results. You have suffered—have been tried by the fires of hell unquenched for twenty-four years. I rejoice with you and am glad your years of suffering and grief are at an end. You deserve all the happiness you are now enjoying. May you ever enjoy it is my prayer. Wife and I grieved, mourned and were saddened by what we thought was his untimely, unjust end."

"Only the Almighty can reward you, sir, and your good wife for your greatness, for what you have so magnanimously, so magnificently done; and He will. I can, in my human weakness, only feebly express, with inadequate words, my everlasting gratitude and thanks. I will ever be at your command to serve you and yours in any capacity you may choose. Again I thank and bless you."

"The pleasure of knowing and doing for him was all ours, sir, I assure you."

Never was friendship and respect more steely bonded than here as for a long moment they stood in tight hand clasp, looking straight into the other's eyes.

Scores of cards—informal invitations to the wedding had been written—were all sealed and addressed, ready to be mailed upon landing: one to each member of Daniel's and Jo's mother's and father's families and friends; also the Judge's, Robert's, Alston and Lucy Farris' most intimate friends.

It had been a tremendous undertaking; requiring time, patience, and at times, the help of the entire assemblage.

The morning of the last day of the voyage, Daniel was recapitulating some incidents of his wanderings. He finished by saying, "You and I are going over the same route, Jo—the same I traveled, as soon as practical after we are married. The scenes—some of the occasions I know were—must have been, wonderful; but I was so totally unfit to see, to say nothing of appreciating them, I want you to enjoy them with me. We will leave just as soon as we get home from the visit to father's relatives in Williamsburg. Father and I were to have spent the Christmas holidays with them as you know; but you see how things turned out," he beamed—"As we have never seen any of them I am glad they are all coming to our wedding. We will have to charter a hotel, for everyone that I feel we must have, for everyone who *just must come*. Let's see our 'must haves' ran up to three score last night, besides the scores of 'want to haves.' My! can't a fellow's list grow? I hope we haven't left out a soul."

"O, Dan, my heart is so full of pure love for everybody—so full of happiness in everything, I don't see how I can stand it," Jo whispered as Daniel was helping her get her belongings together as home shores were reached.

Upon leaving the yacht, as Jo and Daniel clasped a hand each of Alston Farris and his wife, Jo said, "No matter what the future may bring—never will I cease to glorify 'My Father Who Art in Heaven,' for this most glorious, eleven full months of happiness you have given me, Alston and Lucy. Never will I cease to thank you for the exquisite pleasures it has afforded me," and kiss-

ing a cheek of each she hurriedly left the yacht, hand in hand with Dan.

Wires had preceded them. Hosts of friends with cars were waiting to take the unprecedented happy assemblage to the Foster and Allison homes—there to remain until after the wedding.

As Daniel looked out upon familiar scenes and faces; when he saw Robert—Lank's big form, coming toward them holding an arm each of Mrs. Bishop and Ruth—he was sick with joy.

"Where are the children?" he whispered in Lank's ear when he could speak.

"In the car with the nurse—the dark green one about twenty yards up. Come, want me to go with you?"

"Yes." And the two, with Jo walking between them, a hand clinging firmly to an arm of each, went to the car. Daniel turned his back to the crowd as he took baby Dan Foster in his arms, after kissing the rosy cheeks of Lydia Lu.

CHAPTER XXXV

"Lucy, you and Mrs. Farris have done so much for me. Too much for me to have the audacity to even think of you other than as retired joy and happiness makers, so far as I am concerned. But do you know, you will just have to come to my rescue again, help me arrange to get the crowd in the church. You and Alston, Judge and Mrs. Farris, Mr. Foster, Robert Bishop, Mother, Dad, Mrs. Bishop, Ruth, 'Uncle Robert,' Mr. Lewis,—everyone mentioned have got to come in first and stand nearest Dan and me. How can it be arranged?"

"The only way I see, is for our wedding to be at home, for the public would not allow such as I want and would have, if conventional dignity would permit. Why, I would have that darling cherub of a toddler, Dan-Foster Bishop, as ring bearer, if he fell down every other step or stumbled across the pulpit for a flower, while the

ceremony was being performed—if he saw one he wanted.

“One of you with mathematical turn and precision of mind, must make a formula by which this situation can be effected.”

Mr. Allison laughed, “Jo Byrne, I think it will take an Archemides or a James Sidis, some one who works in circles or fourth dimensions to solve your problem.”

“True, Mr. Allison,” spoke Lucy Farris, “however it gives us food for thought. We *can* get some geometrical figure to solve or help solve Jo’s problem. I know how she feels. No couple extant has had the experiences she and Dan have had—they have just cause to love devotedly and be loved by more people than the majority of mortals are granted. ‘They are lovely, hence, to be loved.’ I am no geometrician, but Dan and Alston are, and I am going to see if they can’t ‘draw a figure and then prove it.’ As Jo says, it must of necessity be unlike other conventional weddings,—it must be different, the circumstances are so manifoldly diverse from others. The first thing in the morning you two, Dan and Al, are going to get busy. I’ll see what can be done, Jo.”

“Thank you dear, dear Lucy,” as she turned, Dan caught her arm and marched her into the living room.

Jo felt another heavy load of weighty responsibility lifted. “Lucy will solve the riddle, Dan, I saw I could not ‘depend upon you,’ ” laughed Jo.

“No, dear, just so I get you—I care not how they enter or leave the church.”

CHAPTER XXXVI

“Listen, Jo, did you hear that clatter? That’s the second or third time I have thought I heard a rapping at the back door. I’ll see what it is.”

“Wait, Dan, let me go, too.”

“I rather you wouldn’t, dear, besides it is cold out here.”

In a few minutes he came back with a large porch

chair and to Jo's astonished wonder he was followed by a big, stout, old negro woman. She had on a long, black, "plush" coat which she began to unbutton as she came into the warm room displaying a brown wool dress of large checks, the front entirely covered by a large white apron. Her stockings were silk, of a dark, pinkish, drab color; her feet looked comfortable in "old lady comforts," neatly laced to the top. Beneath her hat of green velvet, with sweeping black plumes, strayed grey locks of hair. The large, capable hands (made rough by much hard work and labors of love for both black and white) were incased in grayish green fabric gloves. She held tenaciously to a tan purse, which, in size and shape resembled a spend-the-night bag.

Daniel, placed the chair for her. As she sat down he said: "Now tell your story—Callie, I believe you said was your name."

"Yes, sir, Callie Boyd."

And Callie began her story. Before she had proceeded far, Daniel said in low, cloudy voice: "Wait a few minutes, Aunt Callie." He left, returning in a few minutes with his father, Judge Farris, Mrs. Farris, Alston, Mr. and Mrs. Allison. Making known the visitor as all were seated, he said, "Aunt Callie, will you begin again, please. All these people are interested and want to hear what you have to say."

She beamed a kind, motherly smile upon them all, folding her hands one above the other and without the least embarrassment or constraint began.

"Well, as I was sayin', my daughter-in-law has been readin' lots in the paper erbout somethin' which peared to me I was 'specially intrusted in. I didn't say nuthin' to nobody; but I puts on my apron and hat and goes to see Miss Eva Wilson—a white lady I wurks for sometimes. I asked her if she had read anything in the papers about a 'Mr. Foster, a way off somers, who was in a wreck of some kind long years ago and who had lost a little boy, and so on.' She said, 'Why, yes, Callie, the papers have been full of it. Why do you ask?' I said

well, it's jest a pretty, strange, sad story to me; and would she read it all over to me;—my daughter-in-law read it, but niggars don't read as understandable and natchul lack as white folks. Or tell me the story if you haven't time to read it, I said, I will nus the baby while you sews and talks, if you wants me to. She said she had as soon read it as tell it. But some of the papers was gone, so whut she couldn't read, she tole.

“Well, I said to myself (as she read) I know I knows somethin' don't nobody else knows—somethin' whut aint been writ in the papers and Ise gwine strait to that boy and tell him. So I borrowed five dollars from Miss Eva (I had a little money of my own saved up) promisin' to wurk the five out when I gits back, so I hit the fus train out and jus got here.

“Everybody said that wus the right place yonder cross the street, but a cullard gemmun said you all wus over here, so I camed over. I knowed somebody wus here, cause the place wus so lit up, but it tuck me a monstrous long time to git er answer to my knocks.”

She unfolded and folded her hands—merely exchanged places with them, as she did her feet which were slightly crossed.

“I don't 'members erzactly jus how many years ergo it wus, but it's been er long time. It wus when my son Bud went to Tóe-lé-dó to live. I stayed home with Hessie, my gal, as she had two little chillun. Well, Bud tuck sick in Tóe-lé-dó and sont word fer us to fetch him home, he thout to die. Well, 'twus when we wus bringin' him from dat place whar we wus to meet him dat dis all happened. We wus goin' down a long stretch er straight, white, sand, road; I saw a funny lookin' object in the road, it looked sorter like a dog or large rabbit, 'cept hiturd git up and fall down. I said to Hessie, 'Hess dats a chile.' She said 'no 'taint no chile, hits a stump with a cat or sumpthin a settin on it.'

“My niece who was drivin' the double horse wagin we had rented from a white man, didn't like for nobody

to talk to him to distract his 'tention when he was drivin' peart horses, so I didn't say nuthin' to him; but when we got near so I could see, sho nuf it wus a chile—a little white boy. I made my niece stop and I got out. I sot on the side of the ditch and tuck the little feller in my lap. His clothes was all tore, but you could tell they wus nice. And dirty! his hair wus full of leaves an' sand, and stuck out in hard straight tags whar the blood had dried; an' his face an hans wus smeared wid blood and dirt mixt wid tears whar it looked lack he had been a cryin'. He looked pale an' sick lack an' it was mos dark. I jes knowed somebody had druv along thar at a fas rate and didn't see him and knocked the little feller down. He was so cold, he was most stiff—an it wusn't so powerful cold nuther. I didn't see how he could be so cold, if he had been thar a short while. He wus that cold he couldn't walk, was the reson he wus stumblin' erlong an' afallin' down. I tuck him in the wagin an' gin him some warm milk an' crackers whut we had fixed, at a cullard pusson's house about a hour before, for Hessie's baby Booker T. He et lack he wus most starved. When I wiped the dirt offern his face and hans—he wus that puttie! I wropped the piece of a old soft blanket eround him whut I had been a settin' on, an he cuddled rite down in my arms an lap, an when he got warm he went fast asleep.

“My niece said, ‘you better put dat white chile down and let him erlone, somebody done stole dat chile an put him dar jest to see whut nigger ud be fool enough to pick him up, den dey’ll git yer fer ‘nappin or stealin’ or some-thin’ of the kine.’ I said, ‘Honey, day’ll jest hafter git me, fer I aint er gwine ter let *no* chile, white or black. be cole an hongry an not git him warm an feed him if I kin, an I aint ergwine to leave him in these woods by his little self no how.

“Well, that chile slept slap on 'till we got to my sister's house erbout eight o'clock. When we driv up an got out, dat chile wus as bright and spry as eny of um.

“They all talked so much erbout whut they done to

niggers in dat part of the country, I got kinder skeered; still I hilt out that nobody would bother me whin I tole um how 'twus an' showed um the cuts an' scratches on his little face, arms and laigs; showed um his tore-up clothes, whut eny body could looked at an tell they wus fine to begin with. Still they kept on talkin'. Arter a while my sister sayed, 'I tell you Callie, I washes for a ole lady an her son an three chillun, who thay calls "Granny Dunkin an Mister Jim." I got to take the clothes home in the mawnin' an' you kin go with me and take the chile.'

"Up to dat time I aint ast his name. I tuck him on my lap an said, honey whats yore name? an' he said as plain as day 'Daniel Benson Foster.' We all looked at each other, none of us knowed any Fosters in dat whole country. So then they all *knowed* somebody had stole him for ransom and he had runned away from them. It did look fishy an' I wus beginnin' to get skeered too. Ma-Jane, my sister, sayed: 'You come erlong, we will take Danul—I will put you out way belo the house an' when we gits to the corner whar Granny Dunkin' lives, I'll let him out and tell him to go the way you went an stop an play with the chillun in that yard till you comes back, an' you keep on gwine strait down the street. We will ketch you at the corner by the little grocer store whar I stops an sells aigs an' chickens.

"'I allus goes in the back way wid de clothes an' I'll take pertickler pains to see if he's in the yard playin' with Mr. Jim's chillun; if he is, he will be all right, for Granny Dunkin aint er gwine to see him suffer.'

"Well, we did jest that erway, an hit turned out jest as MaJane sayed it wood. She saw the little feller several times arter dat in the yard playin' with Granny's gran-chillun an he wus that happy she sayed.

"As the story was writ up all right except this part, an' sayin' the boy didn't know how he got to Tennessee, I thought I would tell you erbout this; cause hit wus erbout the same time all this happened that wus writ an' that wus the same name the chile give me, an he wus

shore lost." She gave an emphatic nod of her head, a twist to her mouth which sealed her part of the story as unquestionably true, so far as she was concerned.

Aunt Callie was through, the moment was tense. Alston Farris was to the rescue again,—

"Well, for an all round good sport; an exceedingly thoughtful, conscientious, sympathetic soul; for quick thought, judgment and executive ability; for an A. No. 1 good doctor and nurse, I recommend the olive branch for Aunt Callie. She certainly can go head."

Everything was perfectly clear now, no mystery of the twenty-three years that hadn't been completely, thoroughly explained and accounted for.

Before Aunt Callie had gotten half through her story, Jo had left her place at Dan's side and sat on a stool at her feet crying with her face buried on that good soul's large, ample lap. Aunt Callie did not hesitate, did not even pause in her talk as the change was made, she simply put her feet flat on the floor so as to make the lap more comfortable for Jo's head, put a hand on her head and stroked her hair occasionally, as she talked.

Only once did Aunt Callie interrupt her story; then she stopped abruptly and asked—"which one is Daniel Foster?" Daniel made no reply but got to his feet at once, came over and sat on the floor at her feet very near Jo. "I thought so," she smiled as she looked pleasedly on. "You two mus be sweethearts, ain't you?" Dan raised his head saying, "Yes, Aunt Callie, we are sweethearts. We are to be married Wednesday night, at the church down on the next corner and we want you to be sure and be there."

So many touching, heavenly pictures Jo and Dan had made the past fortnight, one could hardly choose the most appealing; but the one with the old black mammy, with kindly beaming face, a hand on each bowed head as she finished her story, certainly could have ranked among the first.

She had spoken to an attentive house—a pin could have easily been heard fall at any time during the narrative.

No other part of the drama had been told more precisely, more connectedly, more earnestly than as told by the old negress in typical Southern negro dialect and when she had finished all she had come to say, she made ready to depart.

"I believes I has tole this correct—my membry has not failed me, I don't believes. Is I rite?"

"You certainly are, Aunt Callie," and Daniel rose to his feet—helped Jo to hers—"I knew there was a good, kind, black mammy mixed up in my childhood someway, and you are she—I am glad to know you; henceforth, I shall endeavor to be as kind to you as you were to me."

"Thank you, Mr. Danny."

"Father, I would give much could Mr. Lewis have heard the story as told tonight. I told him of the large, black negress, but he could place none—thought I was mistaken, as the nurse with us on the train was a little brown woman, and was killed," he said.

"Yes, son, your nurse was Rosa Lamar, a small brown woman. Callie, you have made clear some things that have puzzled me—puzzled us all—very much. I thank you. I am eternally indebted to you for the information you have given and on this night of all times."

As she started for the door, both father and son followed her, "You are not going to leave us now, Callie. Where are you going?"

"To a frien's house erbout er half or er mile out."

The two led the way to the back hall. Mr. Foster said, "Callie, I have much to say to you. I can not tell you now—can not make you understand what all this means to me, to us. I will not try now, I simply want to say that I want you to go to Virginia with me and live with us,—Jo, Dan and me. I have a nice, warm, comfortable house for you and you shall never want for a thing nor will you have to work except as you like. Daniel and Jo will be married Wednesday night, we will be going home in about ten days. Soon after we get home they are

going off on a long trip to be gone about a year before they begin their home making and settle down to work. Can you and will you go with us?"

"What part of Virginie? I come from Virginie."

"Eastern part. Newport News?"

"I don't know that place, I come from Willumsbug."

"Well, Williamsburg is not far from Newport. I have two sisters living in Williamsburg and maybe you will run across some of your old friends sometime—who knows? Will you go?" A smile of contented pleasure, overspread her black, shining face as a lifelong desire was soon to be gratified.

"Yes, sir, I thinks I kin. I has nuthin' to hole me here now, all the gran-chillun's grown and Ise gettin' old,—will soon be sixty-six, 'sides, Ise allus wanted to go back to Virginie."

"Thank you, Callie, you shall go. You shall have your wants, your every wish gratified, from now on.

"Unless you have to go back to your home I will mail your white lady friend, Mrs. Wilson, a check for the five dollars lent you, writing a note of explanation and thanks."

"Thank you, sir, but I will have ter go back for my close, an' to tell um goodbye, an whar Ise gwine."

"Very well, when can you get back?"

"When ever you says so."

"I tell you, Aunt Callie, come back in time for our wedding, Wednesday night and be ready to go to Virginia when we are ready to go ten days later."

"Very well, sir."

"Are you walking?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, wait a moment, Jo and I will take you home," putting a bill into her hand, he went for Jo and his top-coat.

The father supplemented the bill by one of the same denomination, as he bade her good night.

"Aunt Callie, I am sorry I cried all over your pretty new, white apron and mussed it up, give it to me, I will . . ."

"That's all right, honey. Ise a good washer and ironer and it won't take me no time to git hit strait ergin. Mr. Danny and his popper has been so good to me, Ise glad you cried on hit. I jest wishes you chillun all sorts of good luck when you gits married. I has two bran new buck eyes Ise gwine ter fetch you, when I comes back, for a weddin' present—they will shore bring you good luck."

"Thank you, Aunt Callie, that is kind and thoughtful of you; we thank you; but if we have much better luck than we've had lately, we won't want to go to heaven—won't be any use."

"Why, honey, don't say that," she said as she leaned far over to put her hand on his arm, "Don't say that, Mr. Danny."

"Why not, Aunt Callie, I could certainly be no happier in heaven than I am here."

"O, yes, you could, honey, yes, you could, you don't know."

"Well, it's all the same to me and if I can't know any difference what's the use?" laughed Dan as he looked into Jo's eyes.

"You will see honey, you will see," and she crawled out backwards, bidding her new found friends a hearty, friendly good night with voluminous thanks.

In plaintive, croon-like cadence, Aunt Callie began singing softly to herself "Carry me back to old Vir-ginny," as she stood, arms akimbo watching the car until the tail light was completely lost in the darkness; then she turned, shuffled up the irregular walk, sat upon the top step when the singing suddenly ceased. Laying back her apron at right angles across her lap, she reached her hand deep down into the generous pocket of her dress, pulled out a large white handkerchief of bandanna style, opened and spread it out upon her lap. Opening her purse she took out the bills given her by Mr. Foster and

Daniel, folded them in the smallest squares possible, then squeezing them into as small a roll as her vise-like fist could squeeze them, she tied them carefully in the corner of her handkerchief and put the handkerchief back in her pocket. Turning up her skirt, she took a large safety pin from her bosom and pinned the handkerchief securely in her pocket. Lowering her skirt, she smoothed her dress, turned her apron back over her dress, smoothing it out with both hands. She resumed her song repeating "Dar whar dis good old darky's heart has longed to go." As she clambered to her feet she gave her apron a final "smoothe" and after a gentle tap and call, she opened the door, entered with dignity and with greater dignity told of the happenings of the evening. Her social standing rising materially with each declaration, reached the top notch when she concluded with, "I will spend the rest of my days with my rich white folks whar I wont have ter wurk no more only as I pleases." With lips proudly set, head held high, with firm proud tread and exalted air, she made ready for bed.

"Well, Dan, Aunt Callie has completely upset our wedding plans," began Jo as they left the old negress. "I think she should lead the way of all others—and if it would not shock convention,—completely *annihilate* it—she should march right up in front, stand right by the preacher in front of me, so I could think all the time as I looked at her, what she probably will be thinking; 'if it hadn't been for *me*, you wouldn't be here now, this wedding would never have been.' She is a good, kind, generous soul, her heart is as white as her skin is black; she's the whitest black person I know—I love her. O, it makes me shiver and shake, my teeth chatter, to think what would have happened to you,—to that poor, precious baby boy, who had been in the woods all day and part of a night, hurt, bleeding, sick and hungry all by himself. It's the sweetest, saddest thing I ever heard. Poor little fellow! I can see him now all covered with blood

and mud, stumbling along in the dark too cold and hungry to walk. I can't endure to think of it."

Nothing was so horrible to Jo as being left entirely alone—and in the dark! In the woods—a baby boy!—it was too much!

Daniel grew uneasy about Jo. He stopped the car, took her in his arms and in vain tried to quiet her. She had been in a nervous environ for sometime, he knew, and this last sad, touching disclosure of the only mystery that hadn't been cleared, was too much for her already highly strung nerves.

"Jo, if you do not control your feelings, if you do not quiet yourself, I will be forced to take you in yonder house and 'phone for a doctor and your parents.—Listen, dear, I am that little boy who was lost (though no one would believe it to look at this six-footer, would they)?" he laughed. "I am here with you; am absolutely well, without a scratch or bruise of any kind. I am not cold or hungry. I am supremely happy as I hold you to my heart, my beautiful, my sweet, sweetheart.

"Listen, dear, you and I are never to allow any one to be cold, hungry or suffer in anyway if we can help it—, out of respect, love and honor for those who have kept us from such, if for no other reason. For two years now—though I have not been idle—far from it—yet, in a sense, I have done but little, merely trying to drown myself in forgetfulness; I have been as a member of the Do-When-and-as-You-Can contingent; but when we get back from touring the world, I will resume my former line of work and we can give all I make for the care of those who need it,—the worthy poor."

He watched her as she tried to check her tears, tried to recover her self-control. He felt her quivering, inert, body growing quieter, the paroxysms of sobbing grow fainter and fainter. He brushed the curls back from her forehead and eyes, wiped her face with a soft handkerchief, as he continued:

"Your sympathies are very precious to my soul, dear heart, I love you for them; but you must stop crying now,

or you will be sick,—and, Jo, I can't stand for you to be sick."

The storm subsided, she dried her eyes. As she looked into his face he smiled. She burst out anew; but it was an April shower soon over, and she said: "I am all right now, Dan, we can go home."

He straightened and buttoned her coat—she was cold—turned up the collar, drew her close to his side, pulled on his gloves, took the wheel and drove almost an hour before bringing her home—where he left her at once, demanding that she go straight to her room and to bed for the full night's sleep her brain and nerves so needed. She promised, and did.

CHAPTER XXXVII

"Wake up, wake up you drowsy sleeper," called Lucy Farris at Jo's room door the next morning. "Don't you know it's nearly ten o'clock?"

"Nearly ten! Gracious no, you must be joking, Lucy."

"Well, look! your own perfectly good timepiece registers 9:55.

"Pull up that chair, please, Lucy. I don't know when I have slept so good, for so long. Nearly eleven hours of sleep, and dead to the world when you came in,—no telling how long I would have continued my siesta—I am a regular Rip Van."

"It is neither nice nor conventional, I know, to disturb one's slumbers—and Daniel raised a 'rough house' when I said I was coming over. He said you were to ring him when you were ready for callers. If he knew I waked you up, no telling what he would say or do. But this wedding must take place now, it has gone too far not to—Dan or no Dan, sleep or no sleep, and I've brought a plan to submit. Alston and I are invited out for the week-end and this was my best—my only chance of seeing you.

"O, Lucy, I wish you had been here last night. Did Dan tell you about Aunt Callie?"

"No, but Mother Farris did at breakfast. Dan was up and out horse-back riding and didn't get back in time to breakfast with us. I heard him whistling Annie Laurie—he thought to himself (for Daniel is very thoughtful) but you could have heard him easily had you not been so far away in the 'Land of Dreams.' He is so delighted to be back. Delighted to have Dulce to ride with Rex galloping at her heels, barking and prancing his joy at having him back. I don't know which loves Dan best, Dulce or Rex. Father Farris will have to deed them to him. They recognized him the moment they saw him, and showed their feelings, expressed their joy at having him back as knowingly, as touchingly as dog and horse ever did—ever can."

"Miss Jo Byrne, your mother says, do you want breakfast in your room?"

"Is it ready now, Jane?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"If it's not too much trouble, yes, please. I have company. You will join me, Lucy?"

"Thank you—no. After breakfasting with Mother and Father Farris, you *know* not. If I had come from my home, it would be very acceptable," she laughed.

"Bring service for one then, Jane."

"Birds—Jane? Who has been hunting?"

"Yes, ma'am, birds. Mr. Daniel Foster sent them over."

"Bless his heart. Now I know you will join me, Lucy. I could never eat two whole birds. Jane, bring another cup and more coffee if this urn is not full, or bring the grounds and we can 'perk' it right here. Send Dude up to make a fire, it's warm in here, but I do so love to see the blaze."

"Now for the plan, Lucy, did you figure on an important place for Aunt Callie?"

"No, she was an unknown quantity when these plans

were formulated, but I have a spectacular place for her, however—she will be the black dot on the rivet!”

“The what? You haven’t seen Aunt Callie, she will never make a dot on anything—she is taller than you, and weighs two hundred, if she weighs a pound,” laughed Jo.

“She will work well here though as a dot. I have planned it this way. Here is the outline. The Bridal Choral comes in first, of course, in rainbow colors, forming a bow facing the others who—in standing *this* way, make a perfect fan.

“You and Dan, with that darling Lydia Lu right here will be the hand-painted picture on the face of the fan—see? No geometry, trigonometry or calculus about it. Aunt Callie sits just here, back and a little to the left of the preachers, where she can see everything; so you see, Aunt Callie will be the dot on the rivet and as long as the dot holds the fan is good—otherwise not. So you see she will be the most important factor in the wedding, after all,” laughed Lucy Farris.

“How do you like the idea—the arrangement, Jo?”

“Simply could not be improved upon, Lucy, you are a wizard and an angel! You don’t know what a burden is off my brain and heart and how doubly I thank and love you, if my love for you can possibly be doubled as immense as it is,” and pushing aside the tea cart, she threw her arms around her neck and kissed Lucy Farris upon each cheek.

“The rehearsal of the chorus was perfect last night. Those boys and girls have splendid voices, they blend perfectly. They are a congenial bunch, too, which adds zest and flavor to it all.

“I may not see you any more until Sunday night, as Alston and I are going over this evening to see Lois and Ben; if you think of anything that’s been omitted or you and Dan want added or changed, let us know at rehearsal Tuesday night.

“Now you better hurry and get dressed for I heard Dan leave the garage. I knew he couldn’t stand it much

longer. Yes, there he is—I'll go out the back to avoid a difficulty. Tra, la." But Jo heard her pleasant repartee as she called back to Dan, "Go back, sir, she has not rung for you and you know it."

CHAPTER XXXVIII

Before a bright, blazing fire in the living room at The Camp, with a large round table, littered with papers, glue pots, pins, et cetera, between them, sat Jo and Dan, busily cutting out and arranging in order in a book elaborate write-ups of their wedding and affairs leading up to it from their home papers, embellished with elaborations from state papers. Jo stopping to read aloud a paragraph now and then and commenting, concluding one, with: "Lucy, too, said it was a most beautiful wedding. The most appealing one she had ever witnessed or taken part in—and they are legion. I am so glad it was all it should have been, Dan, and I am glad it's over. It *was* perfect, wasn't it?"

"Yes, my precious wife, it was. But this book is not perfect, will never be perfect until your picture, as a bride is put right here. I do so want it, Jo; you, too, will regret not having it made. Let's have no regrets, my darling Jo. Won't you go the first thing in the morning and attend to this very necessary duty?" Jo frowned. "I know how you abhor such, but this is for our future reference, our autobiographies, Jo. Won't you for me? Grant the first request I make of my bride?"

"I do hate it, but if you will have yours made, too, and put right here, I will."

"You little torment, you know how crude that will make it, our keepsake. My likeness will be entirely out of place in a bride's book. I am the groom, don't you know, I can—"

"Just the same it has got to go in, the groom belongs to the bride, doesn't he? and this is the bride's book."

"Shall I phone Lucy to meet us? Where and what time?"

"No, let's have it done without anyone's 'knowledge or consent'—surprise them—especially as I said so vehemently 'I would not.'"

"All right, just the thing."

"Now as that is all settled and we have done as much as we can tonight on the book, tell me, Dan, all about yourself after you left me that awful night. You promised you know. You have told me parts disconnectedly—now I want all connectedly."

"Yes, dear Jo, I promised."

"It's over a dark, gloomy, way I would carry you; black, ugly pictures I would show you. I went to the lowest depths; drank the bitter dregs to the last drop, leaving the cup bone dry. Only a grinning, hideous skeleton, with clanking bones would you see, if the halo of your blessed love did not overshadow all, blotting out the hideousness. I can show you the place—the spot—where I endured the most hellish, anguishing hell; when in failing to receive Bob's letter, I could see you in that other fellow's arms, see this curly head upon his breast; these soft, white, shapely, dimpled arms around his neck; his lips clinging to yours. You can never know the anguish of soul, the despair, the utter loneliness I experienced. Thank God such terror is over forever for me!

"I can give only a synopsis, and try to show you some inspiring views and scenes letting you see and enjoy for yourself when we traverse practically the same route, but, I, in a very different frame of mind, under very different conditions."

"I am sorry it had to be, but I want to know everything. I suffered, too, Dan.—Oh, the ugly, unkind, untrue remarks people made, such horrible insinuations—and how they did stare and criticize. I said nothing. I simply closed my ears and eyes and went dumbly, blindly on. I thought—I *knew*—that it mattered not where

you were or who you were, that you had loved me—I knew you could never forget me any more than I could you and somehow those thoughts helped the hurt.” Humbly, gratefully, he kissed her hand, drew her closer.

“The most horrible thing was the uncertainty, the suspense—

“Begin at the beginning, dear”—and sitting in the close clasp of her husband’s arms, Jo listened to his story of anguish, suffering, pain, deprivations and wanderings.

“When I left you that night I went straight to my room. It was about 10:30. I pondered earnestly, seriously what was best to do. I was crazy, stark mad. I knew I could not live in the same locality with you in the light of what you had heard, of what I had been awakened to. I knew I could not see you with another man—I would have lost my reason—would not have been responsible for anything my suffering, my anguish of soul, the unspeakable disappointment would have forced upon me. I concluded as I was an unknown quantity, it would be best to make good the allegation and continue the roll in correct style. I arranged my business as best I could, on such short notice. I, at least, fixed it so no one would suffer by my leaving. I left statements, bank stocks, life insurance, etc., all fixed so the Judge and Robert would have no difficulty in arranging them lawfully as my beneficiaries. That arrangement cut like a knife—tore my heart, for I wanted you to have my all, especially my life insurance and car, for you seemed to love ‘our car’ as you called it; but I knew that would never do, would only be adding fuel to fire. I had asked the Judge and Robert to take care of you for me and I knew they would. I wrote the notes for you, Judge and Mrs. Farris and left. I had gotten to the hall door. On more sober thought I decided I would talk with the Judge. I came back and waked him. I could not endure that he or Mrs. Farris should think me ungrateful because of what they had done for me, especially under the then existing circumstances.”

"The hardest thing I ever did up to that time was bearing my soul to him.

"Grief, anger, revenge, hate; every known passion, fought for ascendancy in my brain, I was almost persuaded to do as Job's wife tried to induce him to do 'curse God and die' for I could not understand why the All-Wise, the Omnipotent, having a son of his own, could inflict such torture, raise such unsurmountable barriers in the path of a hapless, unsuspecting man.

"Had it been human weaknesses, material obstacles to have overcome, I would have 'rolled up my sleeves,' 'gritted my teeth,' and 'bearded the lion in his den,' I would have gloried in matching wits with any man, letting the victor have the spoils. Had I lost, I would have been 'game,' as the fellows say, I would have gone on and made the best of it. But what was I that I could fight against fate,—Omnipotence? I wanted *you*; I had worked, lived and prayed for you and I had failed in that—my all—and by reason of circumstances over which I, no human, had control; could change or rectify one iota; so the best thing for me to do was to get as far away from every semblance of the past as completely as speedily as possible. I went to my office, fixed some important papers necessary for explanations. I worked 'till late night—or early morning. And, do you know, I don't remember just how I got to Robert. My one anxiety was to make sure I would not lose you entirely, keep some tangible hold on you until you married—then, of course—!

"Well, I simply wandered around like a blind dog, little knowing, caring less where I went or what happened to me.

"I could not sleep; I was growing exceedingly restless and irritable. What took me to New Orleans, I know not. When I got off the train and put on my hat, I discovered an exchange; some one had my hat. Then I noticed an exchange in traveling bags. I was looking round to see how, who and why, when I saw another fellow had made a similar discovery, someone had his hat and bag. We recognized our bags at once, he started for

me, I for him. Our hats were identical except mine was a half size larger, both bags were alligator, but of slightly different size and shape. We apologized, made the correction and turned and walked away in opposite directions.

"That afternoon I got in the elevator at the hotel, my friend of the morning was on it. He looked at me, my hat, clothes and shoes. I did him likewise. We were satisfied.

"That night as I sat at dinner, who should be ushered in, but my friend again. He was seated at the same table with me, before he recognized his friend of exchanged personal belongings. He smiled pleasantly, then deliberately rose to his feet, put his hand in his pocket, drew out a bill folder, opened it, took out his card and handed it to me, and with the dignified demeanor of one celebrity meeting another—he said: 'This seems to be inevitable. Being human, it is but natural that you should want to know who your companion for the rest of your natural life is destined to be.'

"The card bore J. W. Mayo in plain script. I had no cards, I simply extended my hand, as he sat down, pronounced B. D. Retsof with remarkable alacrity considering the newness.

"Never shall I forget his whimsical expression as he looked straight in my eye as I pronounced B. D. Retsof, as if to say, 'too thin, son, too thin.' The entire procedure—remarks and all—were so natural, yet so absolutely foreign to anything I had expected, I was impelled to 'sit up and take notice,' as he would say. I was impressed by his ridiculous dignity and looked upon him as something I needed, a kind of antidote.

"I noticed from his card he represented a reliable firm of New York and New Orleans. He was interesting—so entirely different from any one I had known. He kept me amused, as well as entertained, the thing I, then, so much needed. He had a wonderful, a comprehensive supply of slang and used it like a past master. His expressions were deliberate, clever, cheery, positive and

forceful. He had a head full, of common sense, a broad streak of wit and some humor,—he was a fair sample of a Will Rogers, Abe Martin, H. I. Phillips, Thomas Dargan (universally known as Tad) mixture. I really believe he kept my head above water, for, at times, I laughed involuntarily and tried to remember his expression of voice, face and attitude and the language he used, which, of course, helped. Most of his wise-cracks and come-backs must have been original for they rolled out spontaneously; most of them I had never heard before. He simply talked in volumes of slang.

“He was much interested in his work—consequently, he interested me in it. I finally decided to go with him to South America as I had nothing else to do, nowhere else to go. So we left for Rio de Janerio, to ‘pull off a deal.’ He seemed to think I was his inferiority complex. We ‘pulled off the stunt with remarkable speed and skill,’ he said. He was thrilled, delighted, and called for more. Luck stayed with us. But I began to grow restless; things were growing familiar, common place, easy to handle; so I began thinking too much again for my good, and being thoroughly disgusted with the morals of the populace, I left.

“When we are in New Orleans or New York, we must find Mayo—you will enjoy his light—but witty expressions; his easy, graceful manner. He is a Chesterfield.”

“Is he married?”

“No, he is unmarried—a man of the world. What one would term a woman hater, but, ‘believe me,’ I know what it will mean to him when he does meet his affinity. He will know how to treat her. He will be on the square.

“We took steamer for Brazil. The voyage was exceedingly pleasant, so far as the weather and accommodations were concerned; but there were two young couples aboard, one just married; he was taking her to his home in Havana, Cuba; the other couple had a baby boy about two years old, (they were related some way, possibly brother and sister-in-law) and they were going to her home for the first time since they were married, I

learned. They were ideal couples, both as to behavior and appearance. They were Creoles or some amalgamation of Spanish type and were the principal attraction of the other passengers, and crew—especially the boy. He was a handsome fellow, bright as a silver dollar and every inch a boy.

“I stood it as long as I could. It is impossible to express to you my feelings, the sensations of my extreme loneliness and longings for what I knew could never be for me.

“The boy and I became fast ‘buddies.’ He and I spent most of the time, they were aboard, in my berth; in that way I managed to live somehow.

“Brazil is a magnificent country. The same can be said of it, that the Queen of Sheba said of Solomon’s wisdom, riches and glory—‘the half has never yet been told.’ The climate is delightful in Rio de Janerio. A gigantic pile of rocks in conical shape—called the Sugar Loaf, on the left; another huge mass of rock, the Pico, on the right, greet you as you steam into the harbor. The bay you enter is said to be large enough for the anchorage of all the navies of the world. I do not doubt it. Immense palms as large as our trees, with twining vines, gorgeous flowers everywhere to shade and protect you from the sun. I was told the new Rio is quite different from the Rio of a decade ago,—it is certainly up to date now, in every particular. Mayo and I were there in the interest of coffee and, believe me, we saw enough coffee to interest us—thousands and thousands of sacks piled high.

“Sanatos and Sao Paulo are about on a parity. Sanatos has broad, clean streets with low white houses, giving pleasing views. Everyone seemed busy and prosperous.

“While in Brazil the long, white envelope from Robert reached me regularly—and with my time occupied all day and part of the night,—my mind occupied parts of the time with coffee deals, business papers, letters et cetera, I did very well in Sao Paulo until everything got down to such clock-like regularity and dittoness, I got

to where I had more time than I needed for retrospection—so I checked out.

“You will like that part of Brazil—most all the Eastern part, but my, when I left Mayo going west to Colombia! Such travel and over such barren wastes! The people, a mixture of white and Indian, are of the lowest type—ignorant and savage. Yet, in Bogota, the public buildings are of architectural pleasing beauty, especially the library, national observatory and museum of natural history. With so many newspapers (I never did learn the exact number, more than a score though) I could not understand such dense ignorance. You and I won’t go that route,—though I would love to send each of our men a genuine Panama hat and the women a pen set with emeralds for they are wonderful stones (from Bogota), but we will detour. I can’t let you go over such desolate wastes with such savage ignorance. We will take another route from Sanatos, go through the Panama Canal thence to Hawaii—I did not go through the canal. I want to.

“I took an awkward route, I doubled back, going to Havana, Cuba, for there I was expecting the long white envelope from Robert, just a breath from you, my darling, and I was not disappointed.

“I went from there to the Azores, but did not tarry long. Left for London, England, where I was expecting another long white envelope addressed by Robert. It did *not* come. Jo, only the All-Wise knows what I endured then. I used to hoot at the idea of brain storms, but they are very real, I assure you. There were times when I was a raving maniac, when I would have given my life, my soul, for one touch of your hand. You would not let me kiss you, even when I had the right, and when I thought of another man claiming your lips, with you in his arms—! Jo, no language has ever been printed or uttered that can convey an idea of the utter despair, the anguishing hell I experienced—and it would sicken your soul to know the beastly depths to which I descended for

only one twelve hours cessation from maddening thoughts which burned and seared my brain almost to distraction.

"I knew it would take months of extremes of heat, cold, deprivation of every nature and kind to keep me going after I had waited another month, in vain, for a word from Robert, so I plunged into the heart of Asia.

"I passed through, oh, I don't even remember the places, but Netherlands; parts of Germany, spending about twenty-four hours in Berlin; northern parts of Poland, Ukraine, through the Southern peninsula of Russia across the Caspian Sea, where travel began to be more and more difficult. Tibet was miserably cold and desolate. Pillars of white salt, standing sentinel over small basins of water, frozen by the wind made the bleak desolation bleaker still and was enough to make one long for annihilation. The valley of the Yangtze was refreshing compared to the cold, barren nothingness of Tibet.

"Shanghai, China, was a marvel to me and so different from anything I had ever seen or expected to see I nearly forgot myself 'for a season.' One, who has not seen it, can not form an adequate idea of such an absolutely opposite condition existing in one and the same place. The Chinese Shanghai is crowded with herds of Chinese in dirt, squalor and rags. The English Shanghai is inhabited by civilization from all over the world, neat and clean, living in pretty homes, carrying on their work in up-to-date shops and houses. The streets are broad and clean. Such a conglomeration of varieties in everything was—well, interesting, to say the least of it, as well as self-obliterating for a time.

"I went from Shanghai to Tokyo, and for every variety of transportation, things both old and new, every conceivable vehicle thing, since the beginning of time, it seemed to me, to every modern convenience of modern times contended for supremacy: bicycles, dog-carts, push-carts, rickshaws, human beasts of burden, street cars, automobiles; all, in one grand parade, pushing and jostling for the right of way.

“Hotels, of English style of fashion, for the high—the rich; cheap inns, for the low—the poor.

“Be you Buddhist, Catholic, Jew, or Gentile, places of worship are there for you.

“Every style and nature of dress.

“I happened to be there at ‘clean up’ season. Everything was washed and sunned under police supervision. Tokyo, the Great Cosmopolitan it is called, and cosmopolitan it is.

“I dropped due south then to the Philippines—stopping at Manila. The inertia of the people, hence; filth—and as I do not care specially for vice, rice, fish and filth, I did not tarry long on these islands.

“Keeping my southernly direction; passing through and by the Dutch East Indies I came to Australia, keeping close to the east coast stopping at Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne; on the west coast at Perth. Then across the Bay of Bengal to Madras, India.

“At Brisbane, I saw my first lyre bird.

“Out at one of the ‘runs’ or sheep ranches, near Sydney, I saw more sheep than I thought possible to crowd together in one place—ants and rabbits without number. Sydney is a beautiful city, its university is large and a splendid, showy building.

“Australia is a strange, wonderful country, but it did not appeal to me in the least. One thing that recommended it, that I noticed, was the seemingly equal distribution of wealth, more so than anywhere I had yet been, none seemed extremely poor, none extremely wealthy.

“I went over land to Perth; then, across the North Indian Ocean, the Bay of Bengal to Madras, India. Medleys of song, language, religion, races, dialects, industries,—medleys in everything, greet you in India, as in Tokyo.

“I happened to be in India during the time of the Southwest monsoon. I shall ever remember what a southwest monsoon is. I went to Delphi for the sole purpose of seeing the Taj Mahal. It is certainly a most perfect poem in marble. Never has architectural perfection

claimed its own more than this piece of workmanship, in my opinion. They said it was most beautiful in a brilliant India moonlight. I stayed long enough to see it by moonlight—nothing of like nature could be more lovely.

“En route to the Taj Mahal I stopped over at Jaipur to see the Hall of Winds. It is, as Sir Edwin Arnold called it ‘a vision of daring and dainty loveliness’—the straight, broad streets of Jaipur were very fascinating to me.

“But, dear Jo, after seeing that dainty loveliness of the Hall of Winds and the Taj Mahal, that exquisite tribute of man’s love for a woman, my whole being became so disquieted again I was almost frantic, I cursed the man who said ‘it was better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all,’—what a lie, I had proved it.

“I made haste to leave Jaipur, went direct to Calcutta thence across Burma. I would have enjoyed that province, I think—the people were impressively easy going and good natured, but I was drunk with longing—drunk with a desire for home, for you,—I was miserable. I gave myself up to misery not knowing or caring where I went. I boarded a steamer, went where it went—then boarded another, and another; finally landed after a very circuitous route, at Honolulu. I think we must have stopped at every port of Oceania.

“Honolulu is lovely—oh, you will love the balmy, swaying, musical atmosphere of those islands.

“Dear Jo, once as I sat overlooking a most luxuriant valley, bordered with cocoanut trees and luxuriant foliage, dreaming, dreaming, the longing to see you, to be with you, to hear you call my name, overcame me, became master of my being. I sat and pondered, pondered, pondered, until the sun was lost behind the volcanic hills, shutting off all vision, except objects quite near. I realized day had gone, night had come. I got up, stretched my stiffened limbs, went to my room, still dreaming. That day at lunch I had found a newspaper, someone had left—it was from the U. S. with a poem of Edgar Guest’s marked. I read the poem, applied it to myself, became more dissatisfied and more miserable, but

I took it as an omen of good luck coming at the time it did. I let it decide for me and let the outgoing steamer determine the route and left for 'Frisco that night. We were not quite a week making the voyage.

"Yes, you will love Honolulu. I want to take you to the very spot where your sweet face peered at me from every hill top, every flower, every blade of grass and rice stalk; beckoning me on: haunting my sleepless hours; yet, so soothingly sweet as hour after hour passed into oblivion, I, oblivious of their passing—you luring me on, daring me to forget.

"So I came, I found you, miracle of miracles! How thankful, how humbly grateful I am that I listened to the voice of the siren that brought me to you."—A long dreamy silence . . .

"It is growing late, my darling, you must get to sleep or you will not feel fresh and rested for the sitting to-morrow, and that must be attended to."

"Dan, did you keep a diary while you were away?"

"Indeed, *no*. I did not care to remember from one hour to the next, to say nothing of from day to day."

"Have you no data, nothing by which a record could be made?"

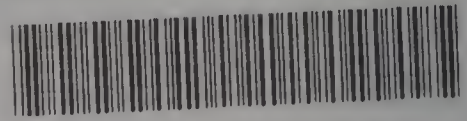
"I have some time tables, steamer routes, hotel literature, possibly—things like that."

"Well, we must get them up and together and with what you have told me the collaboration will be interesting; also be a good guide for our route."

"We will make some very decided changes in our itinerary. There are some places I can not have you go—one is Tibet—it is too bleak and barren; it would make you sick, so much seeming destitution of everything livable. There are other places I missed that we must visit. We must spend some time in Switzerland, Germany, France, Holland, Turkey, and Sunny Italy,—Mussolini's Italy, where they have mixed music, song and laughter with work; converting it into a beehive of satisfied, happy, ambitious people, I understand. In my opinion, Mussolini—if indeed it be Mussolini—has struck the

right chord for harmony—for making a happy, prosperous, well satisfied, gifted, cultured people,—that of mixing — in right proportions — work, music, laughter and song. Any people or nation could not fail to thrive, become great and mighty with such treatment! any home could do the same. Let's adopt that program for our home—what say you? We have already had the work, come now let's have the laughter and song."

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